

TOWARDS A HERMENEUTICAL FOUNDATION FOR LIBERALISM

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**By
Neal Garnet McLeod**

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, *Towards a Hermeneutical Foundation for Liberalism*, I want to formulate a theory of liberalism which has a strong theoretical foundation by drawing on hermeneutics to stress pluralism and "embodied" experience. At the same time, I hold that narratives are constrained by objective reality. In both the Greek and modern Enlightenments, there was an apparent paradox, that of objectivity and pluralism, and my thesis attempts to resolve it. In the first chapter, "The Greek Enlightenment, Hermeneutics and a New Foundation for Liberalism," I use Dilthey's idealistic hermeneutics to examine the Greek Enlightenment, arguing that it was essentially a revolution of ideas. Dilthey examined this process of narrative deconstruction/ reconstruction to point out the inherent plurality of interpretations of reality. In the second chapter, "Rights, History and Nationhood: Towards a Transhistorical Understanding of Liberalism," I wish to show the idealistic limitations of Dilthey's brand of hermeneutics by arguing that certain interpretations of the Good, such as those found in traditional aboriginal narratives, point to a need material support for the communities concerned. While Kymlicka's (1992) arguments for group rights are persuasive, I limit the case for group rights to nations. The final chapter, "The Limits of Reason: Towards an Open-Ended Conception of Rationality," deals with the limits of Enlightenment rationality, both in the human and natural sciences. I argue for a fusion of horizons between the natural sciences and other narratives to move beyond the intersubjective limitations of liberalism (pluralism) and instrumental rationality (objectivity) and towards a new environmental ethic.

âkâc kâ-acimôt

ôma kiskinowahamâtowikamik masinahikanisihk, *ê-isi-itwêstamakê-nistotât takotascikan otisi-pakitin-mâmitonêyickaniw*, ninôhtê-ôsitân ê-mâwacihtahk ochi kâ-isi-itwêstamakê-nistotât ka-sôhkê-pîkiskwê ê-wâkamê-wâpamat êkwa kispakaw nakacitawin. pêyakwâw, nitapwêtân acimowina ê-kipahwikot nîkantapwêwin. nisôwak greek êkwa anohcikê ê-isi-kîtwan-ôsitât mâmitonêyickanahihk, kâ-ayawak kî-nôkosîw papitosîwin, nîkan-tapwêwin êkwa kâ-wâkamê-wâpamat, êkwa nikiskinowahamotowikamik masinahikanis ê-kocihta-oyâstasikôt. nistam matinamakanihk, "greek ê-isi-kîtwan-ôsitât mâmitonêyickan, ê-isi-itwêstamakê-nistotât êkwa oskaytakotascikan otisi-pakitin-mâmitonêyickaniw," nitâpacihtên kâ-isi-itwêstamakê-nistotât omâmitonêyickanihk odiltheyiwa ê-nanakatawêyimêyak greek ê-isi-kîtwan-ôsitât mâmitonêyickan, ê-pîkiskwêyân osam piko kâ-sôhke-miskotinpanât omâmitonêyickana. nisô matinamakanihk, "tipêyimisawina, akinê-acimikowina, êkwa ayisiyiniwakiwin: ê-isi-akam-akinê-acimikowina nisitotamowin otisi-pakitin-mâmitonêyickaniw," ninôhtê-kiskinowapatahiwaan mâmitonêyickani-kipahwikana kâ-isi-itwêstamakê-nistotât odiltheyiwa, ê-pîkiskwêyân paki kâ-isi-itwêstamakêcik omîwasin, tapiskoc anikê-acimowina ininêwak, kiskinowapatahiwêwêwak kwitamawina ê-wiyasi-sitonêhimât kâ-wici-pimatisiciyit. Kymlicka (1992) tapwê e-kî-sôhkê-pîkiskwêhikot kâ-mâmawicik tipêyimisawina, mîna maka ni-isi-kipahwên tapiskoc ayisiyiniwak. nisto matinamakanihk, *kipahwina okwayaski-mâmitonêyickan: ê-isi-pakitini-kwayaski-mâmitonêyickanit*, ê-sapo-wâpamikot kipahwina ê-isi-kîtwan-ôsitât mâmitonêyickan, nisowak kâ-isiyiniwaki-kiskêyimetihk êkwa kâ-aski-kiskêyimêtihk. ni-sôhkê-pîkiskwêtên kâ-aski-kiskêyimêtihk êkwa kotakowak acimowina piko ê-nisôcik osam ê-kê-acipayicik isiyiniwaki-kipahwina (ê-wâkamê-wâpamat) êkwa mina kâ-apacihi-kwayaski-mâmitonêyickanit (nîkan-tapwêwin) êkwa ê-isipayit oskayaski-miyo-itatisiwin.

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kimiyahinawâw oma masinihikan kahkiyâw ninîcinêhiyawak kâ-kî-anwêcikâtêcik, êkwa mîna
kâ-anwêcikâtêcik anohc, êkwa mîna kê-ka-anwêcikâtêcik mônîyâwak kâ-cîsihêhikoyâhkik,
êkwa mîna mônîyâwak kâ-cîsimêhikoyâhkik, êkwa mîna ê-isi-kâkwê-mêscihêhikoyâhkik
ninêhiyâwiwinân.

This thesis is dedicated to all my fellow Crees who have resisted, who presently resist, and
those in the future who will resist the attempt of cultural genocide by Canadians manifested in
deception with words and actions.

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INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I formulate a theory of liberalism which borrows aspects from communitarian perspectives in order to correct the classical liberal notion of an over-arching universalistic perspective. Individuals experience the world not as detached entities. Rather, they experience the world with attachments and commitments. In communitarian perspectives, it is argued that individuals have attachments, such as language and culture, which cannot be discarded if we are to have an adequate view of people and their circumstances. I argue throughout this thesis that human understanding is a historical process which must take into account "lived" and "embodied" experience.

Unlike many communitarians and feminists, one can challenge aspects of traditions by questioning commitments and attachments. Many critics question the prospect of salvaging anything from liberalism if we are to take into account lived and embodied experience. If one follows this line, we also lose the liberal possibility of revisability. The point of taking communitarian perspectives seriously is to respect the thickness of the individual's experience, but this must be qualified. While the individual may belong to culture X, he or she may question aspects of this culture. My theory of liberalism attempts to respect the interpretative location of individuals, but at the same time allows an individual to change and question the interpretative horizon.

John Rawls has been the dominant voice of liberalism in the Anglo-American tradition for the last twenty-five years. While I am generally sympathetic to the principles underlying Rawls' theory of justice, I nonetheless approach the notion of the self and the Good from a different perspective than he does. Rawls envisions the self in universal terms and the self unfortunately has no context (or "thickness" to use the term which is common in the literature

concerning the communitarian-liberal debate). The self in Rawls is abstracted to the point where it is no longer recognizable.

I use a hermeneutical perspective as a way of giving the self a measure of content and thickness. Traditionally, hermeneutics has seen the self as embodied and as a part of cultural and societal interpretative frameworks. Hermeneutics arose as a response to the positivism found in nineteenth German philosophy. Instead of being universal and global, reason is conceived of by hermeneuticists in historical terms.

A hermeneutical perspective also attempts to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Knowledge and understanding are not seen as isolated from historical practices, but rather as artifacts of particular societal interpretative frameworks which occur in time. All systems of understanding are limited, and it is through a conversation between different interpretative horizons that one can arrive at reason transhistorically. Central to this thesis is the notion that different narratives are commensurable with one another. Post-colonial and feminist scholarship challenge the mainstream discourse which, in the climate of modernity, includes both instrumental rationality and also the notion of universal citizenship. Both of these are ultimately products of the poles of the Enlightenment: the notion of instrumental rationality (the positive pole of Enlightenment) and the notion of the universal citizenship (the negative pole of Enlightenment). A hermeneutical view allows one to deconstruct the extreme tendencies of the two poles of Enlightenment. By doing this, one can reconstruct notions of normativity and it is in this reconstructed discourse that marginalized voices can be heard. Through this process, the notion of rationality can be expanded.

In this thesis, I take two notions to be the quintessence of liberalism: 1) the autonomy of the individual, and 2) the ability of the individual to revise his or her life projects. The two notions logically imply each other. If one is to revise life projects, then it seems that an

individual must be autonomous. Coercion cannot produce truly free changes in life projects. Free rational agency implies that the self is an end. Likewise, if one is to be genuinely free, then it seems that one can change life projects. The version of hermeneutics advocated here is important in developing a theory of liberalism because the self is placed in a historical context. My position avoids being communitarian because in my view the self engages in a transhistorical conversation with other selves, thereby having the possibility of transcending historical circumstances.

In the first chapter, "The Greek Enlightenment, Hermeneutics and a New Foundation for Liberalism," I engage in a hermeneutical analysis of the Greek Enlightenment. In *The Introduction to the Human Sciences*, Dilthey stresses the finite nature of human understanding: "Our understanding of life is only a constant approximation; that life reveals quite different sides to us according to the point of view from which we consider its course in time, is due to the nature of both understanding and life" (Dilthey 1961: 109). Historical, interpretative horizons² ground our understanding of objective reality which Dilthey calls Life. Dilthey and Collingwood argue for commensurability between narratives through what they both call historical reenactment. I attempt to use Dilthey's hermeneutics to construct a theoretical foundation for liberalism in two ways: 1) to demonstrate the inherently limited nature of all narratives, and 2) to demonstrate the commensurability between narratives. Later, I wish to draw the comparison between the closure of horizons which we find in the natural positive sciences with the closure of horizons found in communitarianism. With Dilthey's hermeneutics, we can construct a "thicker" picture of liberalism rather than the "thinner" conception of liberalism of the Anglo-American tradition.

Dilthey demonstrates how the gradual rise of naturalism, the positive pole of Enlightenment, ushered in the slow and gradual deconstruction of the traditional narrative of

the Greeks. The naturalism of the presocratics brought about a change in ideas, rather than the material conditions surrounding them. The naturalistic explanations they gave represent the positive pole of Enlightenment which is characterized by necessity and determinism.

Plato's *Republic*, in contrast to the dialectical pull of the sophists, also represents the positive pole of Enlightenment, reconstructing the fragmented elements of the traditional narrative.

Heidegger (1975) uses Heracleitus to argue for a finite notion of understanding and truth. By stressing the limited nature of narratives, there is always a sense of openness in interpretative horizons. The negative pole of Enlightenment, which includes the ideas of freedom and pluralism, is celebrated both by Heidegger and Heracleitus. Both argue for a perpetually opened nature of narratives which can always be amended. The sophistic movement, which is part of the negative pole of Enlightenment, distinguishes between human law (*nomos*) and natural law (*physis*). The difference between the two is demonstrated in the existence of "conceptual holes." There is an inherent difference between objective reality and all descriptions and interpretations, (as well as manners of describing and interpreting), of objective reality. Liberalism accommodates the pluralism of interpretations in a society and there is through it an openness in interpretative horizons.

The thought of Aristotle represents a partial resolution of the paradox of the Greek Enlightenment. While mathematics figures centrally in the foundations of Platonic thought, biology grounds Aristotle's work. Implied in this is a strong version of essentialism, fixing natures to various entities. In his political thought, Aristotle did not have one picture (as Plato did) of the Good, but rather held that the Good was contextual and varied. However, each political context had one rational solution. It is in this sense that Aristotle can be considered a conceptual monist. In each community, there is one dominant narrative which Aristotle, at least in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, tries to link to objective, scientific laws. Aristotle splits the

theoretical sciences from practical sciences in the same way as hermeneutics differentiates between the modes of rationality found in the natural sciences from those that are found in the human sciences. The acknowledgement of the existence of conceptual holes helps to resolve the tension between *physis* and *nomos* in Greek philosophical thought. The sophists, in response to a rigid closure of interpretative horizons, perhaps stress *nomos*, societal construction, at the expense of *physis* (objective reality).

I wish, in the last part of this chapter, to examine the manner in which modern communitarians, Beiner (1993) and MacIntyre (1988), use Aristotle to legitimate and give authority to their positions. For Aristotle, as with the communitarians I cite above, there is only one rational solution, or rational "narrative," for each political situation. Aristotle, along with contemporary communitarians, stresses the embodiment of experience. This, however, can be more descriptive than critical and fails to challenge the dominant narrative. Beiner, like MacIntyre, is uncomfortable with the "relativism" of our age and argues for a closure of the interpretative horizon. Communitarianism, both ancient and modern, does not acknowledge the ability or desirability of an individual to "think outside" an interpretative horizon. In the second chapter, I shall discuss the need to acknowledge historical and embodied experience, stressing the belief in rights as essential in order for genuine pluralism to exist.

In the second chapter, "Rights, History and Nationhood: Towards an Transhistorical Understanding of Liberalism," I link the arguments of the first chapter to group rights. Many in the hermeneutical camp ignore the relationship between narratives and objective reality. Materiality constrains interpretations; Habermas, like myself, challenges the idealistic limitations of the hermeneutical tradition by stressing the materiality of different interpretations of the Good (and of reality). In contrast, Gadamer's idealistic hermeneutics stresses languages instead of the material conditions of interpretation. I explore the relationship

between political narratives and the narrative of the natural sciences in more detail in chapter three.

In the ontology of Anglo-American liberalism, wealth and justice have often been dispensed along individual and not group lines. The problem of deep cultural pluralism is thus avoided as there is a tacit assumption of congruence between theory and practice. Anglo-American liberalism takes for granted that the difference in interpretations of the Good occur at the individual level and not on the cultural plane. A strong theory/ practice split results which downplays the depth of the differences between political narratives. As a Cree person living in a society dominated by Anglo culture, I have noticed a theory/ practice dichotomy in liberal theory which is found in Rawls (1971) and also in the liberalism of Pierre Elliot Trudeau as found in the White Paper.

Will Kymlicka, like Habermas and myself, argues for a theory/ practice fusion. Kymlicka (1992) stresses the importance of our embeddedness in cultures and historical communities and looks directly at the Canadian political landscape. Kymlicka widens the scope of understanding the Good life by raising questions in terms of groups instead of just between "universal" citizens. I think that there is a danger in a universal sense of citizenship, which stems from the positive pole of Enlightenment. The notion of self reaches a point wherein it has no context. With the stress on practice, the self becomes more thick or embodied. Similarly, the story of liberalism also becomes thick and filled, instead of only dwelling on negative liberties and universal selves devoid of content. In this way, pluralism becomes deeper and more significant with no closure of interpretative horizons but rather an openness.

We are not ahistorical beings without attachments and interests (or "contingencies" to use Rawls' term). We are, as communitarians and Hegelian liberals (like Rorty) suggest,

situated in certain historical conditions and within interpretative horizons from whence our thinking begins. Kymlicka extends the foundations of liberalism furnished by Dilthey in the first chapter by saying that: 1) there has to be an appreciation of the existence of conceptual holes (and the pluralism of interpretations of objective reality), and 2) there has to be an appreciation of the value of lived experience.

I want to use hermeneutics to buttress Kymlicka's argument for the pluralism of interpretations of the Good life in Canada. By using the hermeneutics of Gadamer and Habermas, I will critically examine the pluralism and the political life of Canada. Hermeneutics, which Habermas called critical sociology, is the doubting of the status quo which is itself an act of liberalism (e.g. thinking outside a matrix of interpretation). It is reflexive because this thinking outside involves liberalism itself. It is my project to make liberalism relevant in contemporary terms and in the wake of severe political challenges. I do this within history, and not outside of it. While Kymlicka argues persuasively for group rights, I think that this stance must be abandoned in favour of *nation talk*.

Aboriginal people must demand nationhood to obtain control of their destiny. They were once sovereign nations free from European domination. Also, the lived experience of aboriginal people demonstrates the inner contradictions of Rawlsian liberalism which stresses a theoretical ontology of individual rights. While I stress the importance of cultural membership, I do not want to fall into the same nationalistic trap that Walzer does by claiming that each nation should be culturally homogenous. I call Walzer's hyper-nationalism a politics of Otherness. Instead of collectives of people dividing from each other and forming nations, within Canada we could have a confederation of nations which support each other both ideologically and materially. I shall talk more about the ideological exchange in chapter 3.

Rorty (1992) claims that liberalism is the most appropriate (rational) political narrative

of our age, but that it lacks normativity outside of its historical location. Rorty, like the post 1980 Rawls, relativizes the validity of liberalism in a specific historical location, giving it more of a Hegelian than a Kantian spin. Rorty's narrative makes no pretension of being universalistic, but instead stresses the contingency of liberalism which he sees as "antithetical to Enlightenment rationalism" (Rorty 1992: 57). This ultimately becomes incommensurability talk because it completely dismisses the existence of metanarratives. I, along with Kymlicka (1992), hold that there is a commensurability between paradigms and narratives, and that liberalism is a metanarrative.

Aboriginal people could argue against the transhistorical validity of liberalism, saying it is only an artifact of European civilization and cannot consequently be applied to aboriginal people. Aboriginal people would then be in the situation of accepting "traditional ways" which (at least for the Cree) have traditionally excluded women from political power. Ideas of liberalism can be borrowed and applied within their borders. When aboriginal women demand that aboriginal men begin to treat them equally, it is not that they are being tainted with white liberalism, but rather that they share the universal demand for equality and respect. It does not make any sense for aboriginal men to utter soliloquies about justice between Canada and their nations, if women have a second class role in Cree political structures. Furthermore, we should strive towards having an openness of interpretative horizons, always keeping the possibility of future revisions open, instead of falling into the communitarian trap of having a closure of horizons.

While Sandel (1982) rightly attacks the thinness of Rawls' theory, his own theory of the self is too thick and has too little room for revisability. Thus, the notion of "embodiment" has to be tempered. I argue for a version of liberalism which claims to be universal, but which also takes into account lived and embodied experience. In this way there is an attempt to

reconcile the apparent paradox of Enlightenment: that of objectivity and pluralism. Or put another way, the positive pole of Enlightenment, that of necessity, is linked and intertwined with the negative pole of Enlightenment: that of self-creation and freedom.

The intent of this chapter is to show agreement with Rawls in that as human beings we do indeed have the ability to separate ourselves from our ends and to revise our projects. Revision is always a function of collective narratives³ which are always incongruent with metanarratives⁴ (e.g. with "conceptual holes"⁵). I hold strongly that *liberalism is a metanarrative*, but that it is and always must be, a function of embodied and historical experience. We can always attempt to revise and improve the moral narratives of our societies by using both the human and natural sciences. This affirms a sort of Diltheyan "cognitive dualism," but a link can be established between the objective aspirations of the natural sciences and the more pluralistic aims of the human sciences.

The third chapter, "The Limits of Reason: Towards an Open-ended Conception of Rationality," addresses the notion of adequacy (e.g. how well the narrative maps on to objective reality). While the Greek Enlightenment was a revolution of ideas, an important part of the modern Enlightenment was a revolution of means of production. The "successes" of the natural sciences force one to confront the issue of objective reality and the relationship between narratives and metanarratives. The successes of the natural sciences have to be taken seriously, but some elements from other narratives (including aboriginal, Heideggerian and feminist philosophies) have to be used to augment the narrative of the natural sciences. I explore the foundations of reason in both liberalism and the natural sciences and propose an open-ended conception of rationality.

Francis Bacon was the first to celebrate the relationship between scientific knowledge and power. Descartes uses the power of scientific knowledge to deconstruct the medieval

narrative with his "scientific methodology" (Schouls 1989, Susan Bordo 1987). The critical examination of the traditional narrative is the essence of liberalism which is the ability to think outside a system of thought. Descartes, as well as Bacon, argued for an instrumental conception of rationality which portrayed various entities (including the planet) as objects for instrumental manipulation, creating a strong sense of Otherness. Charles Taylor, like Descartes, argues for a "conceptual monism" with the sciences having a hegemony in determining notions of adequacy. I want to define what I mean by positivism. I will use the definition furnished by Habermas that with positivism "[k]nowledge is implicitly defined by the achievements of science" (Habermas 1981: 67). I also characterize positivism as a closure of horizons.

Positivism so defined (at least within my thesis) has connotations of truth and, in turn, of power. Charles Taylor in his essay "Rationality" argues strongly for scientific instrumental rationality. I link communitarianism (including Taylor's) to instrumental rationality: there is a sense of closure in both. While there is something to Taylor's attack on Winch's theoretical defense of Azande magic, it does not follow that his straw man example (Azande magic) is representative of all "attunement" philosophies. His attack on attunement shows the intersubjective limitations of Enlightenment rationality. I think that this limitation can be overcome by incorporating elements of aboriginal philosophy into the metanarrative. Taylor sees instrumental rationality as the final arbitrator of ideological disputes.

Feminist critiques of instrumental rationality underline the importance of recognizing the difference between "objective reality" and mere societal reconstruction (Hekman 1986). The apparent paradox in Enlightenment thought, that of objectivity and pluralism, is brought to light. The feminist critique is pertinent because women are in a good position to engage in a "hermeneutics of suspicion" as a result of their exclusion from Enlightenment narratives for

so long. The emphasis on societal construction over objective reality demonstrates that feminist philosophies draw from the negative pole of Enlightenment: that of self-creation and freedom. The negative pole of Enlightenment is endemic in some strains of hermeneutical (post-modern) thought and threatens to destroy all talk of objectivity and metanarratives.

Ecofeminists such as Bordo (1987) try to balance societal construction with objective reality in that they link the exploitation of the earth with the exploitation of women. All attempts to deal with the apparent antinomies of Enlightenment thought, however, balance concerns between objectivity and pluralism. Feminists such as Bordo point out that the apparent tension (dualism) between the "Otherness" of the physical earth and the human mind (based on the Cartesian model) has, incidentally, the same narrative pattern as the Otherness between women and men. By pointing out the limitations of instrumental rationality, we can extend both justice and the notion of an end to include the environment. This involves the feminist-hermeneutical stress on embodied experience. I differ from Bordo in one important respect. I do not see this mode of telling narratives as an inherently "feminine" process. There are, however, several in the hermeneutical school who argue for an embodied understanding, among them Habermas with his "discursive ethics," and Gadamer with his notion of "fusion of interpretative horizons."

Because of the environmental crisis, the need to engage in the critical examination of instrumental rationality is very great. In turn, I would argue that doubt, the ability to constantly reassess the norms of our society in light of new evidence and experience, is the hallmark of liberalism. Heidegger, like many ecofeminists, engages in the quintessential activity of critical examination and attempts to think outside a system of thought and location and history. This "stepping outside" implies reflection and critical analysis. Our present location in history presently is in an age dominated by technology and instrumental rationality. Heidegger, like

Horkheimer and Adorno (1972), stresses the dark side of Enlightenment which is often overlooked. He, like Gadamer, uses art to move towards an open-ended conception of rationality. Heidegger's critique of instrumental rationality can also spill over into the political arm of Enlightenment thought, namely liberalism.

The limits of reason are also evident in liberalism. In Kant's first critique, the stress on causation reflects the impact "objective," "universal" science had on the human sciences. Rawls, like Kant, also talks about objective and universal laws in political and moral theory. In both cases, these narratives, attempt to be universal, but serve only intersubjective interests (i.e. serving only human interests). We could see Rawls' original position in more hermeneutical terms, with people sharing their "embodied" experiences (conceptions of the Good) with one another and developing a metanarrative by incorporating together elements from different narratives. A liberal such as myself can incorporate the ideas of communitarianism in an attempt to forge a consensus and an overlapping metanarrative. My hermeneutical model of liberalism does not abandon notions of objectivity and necessity, but rather attempts to fill them with content, vis-à-vis lived and embodied experience.

The aboriginal philosophy of attunement is found in the architecture and writings of Douglas Cardinal (Cardinal 1977). However, we must be careful not to romanticize the aboriginal land ethic, as Annie Booth and Harvey M. Jacobs (1990) have done in their work. Also, we must acknowledge the "conceptual holes" between aboriginal philosophy (theory) and aboriginal practice. For example, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations openly supports uranium mining and the Meadow Lake Tribal Council advocates the storage of nuclear waste on their territories. The thrust of the philosophy is that we should seek to live in harmony with the land instead of trying to dominate it. Given the environmental crisis, we can "fuse" (Gadamer's term) the narrative of natural sciences with that of the aboriginal land ethic.

By rethinking the limits of rationality, as found in liberalism and instrumental rationality, we can move towards a new environmental ethic.

I shall attempt to reconsider the foundations of liberalism (with the last chapter drawing from the narrative of science). Also, I shall try to integrate the strong points of the communitarian position into my narrative while moderating the conception of the self which is too thick to keep the possibility of revisability open. For example, there is always a need for theoretical detachment and for the ability to think outside of an interpretative system which must be grounded in history. I shall argue for cognitive pluralism, in which the natural and human sciences are able to supplement each other. I have drawn heavily from the hermeneutical tradition to do this. I know that many in the hermeneutical (and the post-modern) tradition will disagree with my results. Many in this tradition (especially those following Gadamer, Rorty, Derrida and Foucault) will deny the existence of objective reality and metanarratives. I think that the notion of objectivity, however, is necessary if liberalism is to have any normative punch as a moral narrative. The appeal to objectivity also helps to resolve the paradox of Enlightenment: the tension between objectivity and pluralism. My own narrative, *Towards a Hermeneutical Foundation for Liberalism*, takes, like Habermas, the findings of the natural sciences seriously, but at the same time struggles to extend the boundaries of rationality.

ENDNOTES:

1. The term **hermeneutics** refers to a highly influential German school of thought which emerged in Germany in the nineteenth century. The pioneer of modern hermeneutics was Wilhelm Dilthey who tried to wrestle with the problems of modernity, but at the same time sought to provide a corrective to the extreme positivistic tendencies of the Enlightenment. Central to the hermeneutical movement is the assumption that the process of interpreting reality is never complete, but rather it is an ongoing process. Furthermore, subjects always have preunderstandings or biases which influence the manner in which they interpret reality. A link is made between theoretical knowledge and the lived or embodied experience of individuals. The movement has attempted to provide a theoretical grounding for the human sciences. Also, hermeneutics has been highly influential in feminist scholarship and emerging post-colonial scholarship.

2. The term **interpretative horizon** is a key hermeneutical concept which imparts the notion that individuals interpret reality as a function of their (the subject's) historical circumstances. The knowledge of reality always occurs through time and space. There are two related connotations of the term horizon. First, the word horizon implies the limit and extent of an interpretation of reality. In colloquial English, we speak of a person's horizons to refer to their future (i.e. the limits of the possibilities of their life). Second, the word horizon imparts the notion of open-endedness and non-closure. As historical beings, the phenomenological possibilities of reality are always changing and shifting. The constant throughout this Heracleitean flux is the interpretative process itself. By using the interpretative process as a means of establishing normativity, hermeneutics provides limitations and constraints on the way in which human beings can talk about reality. While the understanding of reality is always shifting, we interpret reality in the horizon of our historicity.

3. The term **narrative** denotes an interpretation of reality. The term narrative denotes the process of telling a story. A narrative can occur on the personal level. For example, we can talk about the autobiography of John Jones. A narrative can also denote a manner of telling stories. For example, we can talk about the narrative of the natural sciences in contrast to the narrative of the human sciences. The final sense of the term narrative is the cultural or historical manner in which groups of individuals interpret history. For example, we could talk about the narrative of Indian philosophy. All of these notions of narrative imply the notion of a dynamic *Weltanschauung* (world view).

4. The term **metanarrative** denotes a second-level understanding of reality. In contemporary English, the term "meta" has been used to imply a second level principle. For example, we speak of metalanguage or we speak of metaethics. While it is one thing for a narrative or interpretation of reality to exist, it is entirely another thing for an interpretation to adequately describe reality. In this thesis, I argue that the process of determining the adequacy of an interpretation of reality is by means of comparing one narrative to another. Another important basis for determining the adequacy of interpretation is through the implementation of scientific methodology and rationality. The second element of the test of adequacy is important because of the "successes" of the modern sciences. Clearly, the modern sciences describe,

(at least in part) the physicality of the universe in an accurate manner.

5. I have coined the term **conceptual hole** which appears throughout this thesis. It bears comparison to Heidegger's "ontological difference." In my nomenclature, the term denotes the "hole" (or difference) between any interpretative horizon and reality. Important to this term is the assumption that all narratives are finite and dynamic.

CHAPTER ONE: THE GREEK ENLIGHTENMENT, HERMENEUTICS AND A NEW FOUNDATION FOR LIBERALISM

I shall use a hermeneutical perspective in approaching the historical development of the thought of the Greek Enlightenment. Peter Gay also refers to the Greek Enlightenment (Gay 1977: 72-126). The history of mankind is like a fabric rich with intelligible patterns. The historical nature of Dilthey's work enables us to see the patterns of history in a particularly illuminating way. Viewing the progression of these patterns enables us to perceive contemporary patterns and locations from an enhanced perspective. Dilthey was aware of this interchange between different historical periods: "Every age refers back to the preceding one, for the forces developed in the latter continue to be active in it; at the same time it already contains the striving and creative activities which prepare for the succeeding age" (Dilthey 1962: 156). By using hermeneutics, I intend to examine the gradual displacement of the traditional Greek narrative and the movement towards freedom which culminated in what may be called Greek liberalism (Havelock 1957), the sophistic movement. Through an examination of the Greek Enlightenment, we can see the historical roots of problematic notions of political philosophy and in turn attempt to resolve the antinomies of Enlightenment.

Enlightenment embraces two polarities: the positive pole of Enlightenment (the objectivity which the Enlightenment claims) and the negative pole of Enlightenment (the diversity which the Enlightenment also claims). I was inspired in a general manner to make this distinction by Horkheimer and Adorno (1976). There is a constant dialectical relationship between these two poles. The positive pole of Enlightenment is the dialectical force which pushes towards a closure of interpretative horizon. I use the term positive

because of the connotations of thickness associated with this word, bearing comparison also to the communitarian stress on lived and thick notions of the self and experience. This dialectical force has pretensions of objectivity. In the Greek Enlightenment, the positive pole of Enlightenment first found manifestation in Ionian naturalism. In the modern Enlightenment, it was embodied in the natural sciences.

The negative pole of Enlightenment, in both Greek and modern liberalism, arose because certain historical possibilities presented themselves during each Enlightenment. Liberalism arose to fill the vacuum created by the dismantling of the traditional narrative. In the most radical forms of liberalism, in both the modern and Greek Enlightenments, there was a creation of conceptual holes in the older narrative. Originally, Ionian naturalism was part of the negative pole in the dialectic of Enlightenment, but once the traditional narrative had been successfully deconstructed, the emerging narrative functioned in the same manner as the pre-enlightenment narrative. Both narratives seek to be the basis for determining the adequacy of interpretation. Greek naturalism thus moved the dialectic of Enlightenment closer to the positive pole.

The narrative of liberalism in both Enlightenments was not thick, but was rather thin, and hence functioned as a mechanism through which the traditional narrative could be questioned. In order for liberalism to be plausible, liberalism must be revamped. Liberalism must include objective notions of constraint in an attempt to resolve the paradox of Enlightenment. Diltheyan hermeneutics expresses the inherent paradox of Enlightenment: the conflict between objectivity and pluralism. Dilthey believed that there were two separate domains of inquiry: 1) the object domain of the natural sciences, and 2) the object domain of human studies. Thus, there were two paradigms of inquiry. Dilthey has also been labelled a cognitive dualist because of the alleged unresolved tension in his work between the object

domain of the natural sciences and the object domain of the human studies. The historical roots of this appellation can be traced back to Wilhelm Wundt of the last century who called him a "logical dualist" (Ermarth 1978: 105).

The human sciences, Dilthey argued, could not be governed and regulated in the same manner as the natural sciences. A different perspective, hermeneutics, is essential to analyze the objects of the human studies. Scientific thinking, Dilthey said, "has become detached with our practical contact with the external world" (Dilthey 1962: 78). Positivism is the attempt to give science the priority of interpretation (at least according to Dilthey). Dilthey defines positivism as "the preference for a method which interprets mental and historical reality from the standpoint of the study of the natural-external world" (Dilthey 1914-1977 v. 15: 331. cf. Ermarth 1978: 18). Dilthey's project attempts to provide a foundation for the human studies by tempering the extreme tendencies of the positive pole of Enlightenment (especially positivism) and with hermeneutics. Dilthey's historical approach attempts to mend the "growing separation between life and scientific knowledge" (Dilthey 1914-1977. v. 5: 145. cf. Ermarth 1978: 19).

The positive pole of Enlightenment, as represented in Ionian naturalism and the natural sciences, creates conceptual holes within the traditional narrative. There is always an incomplete correspondence between any narrative and reality. The newer narrative brings the shortcomings of the older narrative to light. Certain aspects of an objective phenomenon are neither captured nor omitted. The contingent nature of any narrative is that it cannot describe all of the phenomenological possibilities of reality. Gadamer, for example, speaks of the historical development of textual interpretation. The textual possibilities of interpretation are never exhausted because the position of the interpreter is always shifting. Because of different and changing ideological starting points (*preunderstandings*), the text is understood with very

different focus. I hold, along with others in the hermeneutical tradition such as Dilthey, Gadamer, and Heidegger, that the phenomenal possibilities of objects are recognized through time. My analysis of the dialectic of Enlightenment attempts to shed light on this process.

It is through the constant attempt to rethink traditions and communal narratives that we struggle against the fragility of our human existence. Dilthey's hermeneutical method attempts to avoid substantialism and the closure of interpretative horizons of previous ages, to avoid metaphysics. In general, metaphysics and dogmas assume that a narrative is complete and self-sufficient. Dilthey notes how the traditional foundation of metaphysics had been changed by science: "... metaphysics loses its position as the foundation for interpreting reality in the special sciences" (Dilthey 1988: 291). Liberalism, at its best, is undogmatic and always open to revision. I intend to revise liberalism by stressing the constraints that science puts upon narratives.

The possibilities of human existence are too wide to be captured in any dogma or in any particular narrative. To do justice to the pluralism and variety of interpretative horizons we must recognize the inherent "approximate" nature of human experience. In my view, a hermeneutical conversation allows different narratives to change as a function of each other. Revision is always possible and involves the thinking outside of a system of thought. The narrative is approximate, but the metanarrative or the collection of possibilities (what Dilthey calls "objective mind"), is always growing. Theodore Plantinga writes: "It is precisely because it is impossible to grasp the whole, because life is many-sided and endlessly manifold, that each and every metaphysical system is bound to fail" (Plantinga 1980: 82). Dilthey, furthermore, stresses the approximate nature of understanding: "Our understanding of life is only a constant approximation; that life reveals quite different sides to us according to the point of view from which we consider its course in time, is due to the nature of both

understanding and life" (Dilthey 1962: 109). Dilthey stresses the important link between life and history: "History must teach what life is" (Dilthey 1962: 74). History is the unfolding of the possibilities of life. This is the process by which human beings understand their location in time and space. It is a process as opposed to a substantial metaphysical entity (quidditas).

Life as it occurs through history is constantly unfolding. Ermarth writes: "Although life is transitory and always changing, it is also characterized by relatively stable coherences and structures which can be elucidated by analysis" (Ermarth 1978: 117). Thus, history is intelligible. We can make sense of it and it is something which is knowable. Life is a process, "a 'becoming', rather than static 'being', but it develops in patterns and coherences" (Ermarth 1978: 117). Thus, while there exists a Heracleitean flux, there is also a substrate. In Heracleitus, the substrate is fire; in hermeneutics, it is the process of interpretation. Life does not unfold at random but rather is governed by universal principles. Dilthey's position incorporates elements of the positive pole of Enlightenment. While there is ongoing creation and generation of meaning, a pattern also emerges.

It is through universal principles that experience, and more specifically historical experience, is possible. In the Diltheyan brand of hermeneutics, it is posited that our understanding of reality is grounded in historical narrative. Bulhof writes: "Life styles and cultures are lived interpretations of this self-disclosing reality" (Bulhof 1980: 1). Cultures are systems of knowledge which ground our location in reality. Our cultures and historical locations provide a thick (or lived) sense of our experience. Any given interpretative horizon is finite and does not exhaust all of the possibilities of life. Interpretative frameworks are finite and frame human experience. Bulhof writes that Dilthey sees "cultures as lived interpretations of reality" (Bulhof 1980: 4-5). Plantinga writes: "Cultural life as conceived of by Dilthey is an endless cycle of experience, expression, and understanding, a dialogue in which the many

members of the human community can and should participate" (Plantinga 1980: 107). Stress on "embodied experience" brings forth the notion of "insider's perspective" (Bulhof 1980: 4), focusing on thickness and practice. This goes with Dilthey's notion of the function of the human sciences.

The stress on lived experience moves towards a holistic approach for political science. Holborn writes: "Living experience is an act that takes place in the individual and is determined by the totality of human faculties" (Holborn 1950:1). A holistic approach allows for a multifaceted way of understanding phenomena. Lived experience grounds reason and explanation in a location in both time and space. A holistic perspective of a theory/ practice fusion has been increasingly used by groups who have been marginalized, such as blacks, women and aboriginal people to point out the contradictions between political theory and political practice. This will be developed further in chapter two. Hermeneutical perspectives "are ultimately based upon the individual's intimate and practical understanding of what it means to be a human being in the world" (Ermarth 1978: 108). Given this, fundamental experiences, such as rage and anger, sorrow and pain, can and must be, imported into the ontology of political philosophy. Political theory is limited and must be supplemented, as Rorty (1992) suggests, by other modes of expression (vehicles of meaning) such as literature and art. I shall argue that these mediums are profoundly important for politics.

A transcendence, a thinking outside of given systems of thought, occurs in many ways from our ongoing hermeneutical conversation. Dilthey writes: "Understanding arises ... from the interests of practical life where people are dependent on communicating with each other" (Dilthey 1962: 122). A thinking outside of systems of understanding is found throughout history, and it occurs through a dialogue with people embedded (both diachronically and synchronically) in different interpretative horizons. The term *Verstehen* (Understanding) is

central to Dilthey's hermeneutical project. Dilthey writes: "Understanding is the rediscovery of the I in the Thou ..." (Dilthey 1962: 67). We recognize ourselves in the Other; the Other is no longer an alien, but rather an extension of ourselves. Dilthey writes that "this sameness of the mind in the I and Thou and in every subject of a community, in every system of culture and finally, in the totality of mind and universal history, makes the working together of the different processes in the human sciences possible" (Dilthey 1962: 67-68). Dilthey believes that the conversation with Others is an ongoing and unending process.

The ongoing hermeneutical conversation envisioned by Dilthey implies a human nature which makes different experiences commensurable with one another. Dilthey relates "the nature of Understanding" to "the substratum of a general human nature" (Dilthey 1990: 112). It is by means of a universal narrative (a metanarrative), which is constantly being fed from a myriad of tributaries, that hermeneutics can avoid any trite charges of relativism. The process of Understanding, which remains constant, validates the fact that our interpretations of reality are constantly shifting. Thus, the content of the interpretation changes, but the process of interpretation remains constant and universal. The overarching structure of interpretation allows different interpretative horizons to intersect and interact with one another.

An ongoing hermeneutical conversation forces us to rethink the meaning of liberalism. The ongoing process of defining the meaning of liberalism embodies one of the Enlightenment ideals of an open-ended interpretative horizon. Enlightenment thought and practice, inspired by the dialectical force of naturalism and science, creates "conceptual holes" into the traditional narrative. At once this is an act of liberation from the dogma and drudgery of the older narrative. The quintessence of liberalism, the ability to revise and to rethink traditions, achieves an openness of interpretative horizons. I am arguing against the Rortian notion that different narratives merely replace each other through time. All thinking is

always a function of our historicity and what has come before us. The process that the historical Enlightenments introduce, however, allows one to rethink our historicity and location within time in a new and invigorating manner. Liberalism, at its best, is a dialogue between different people, wherein we attempt to see ourselves in each other. Furthermore, dialogue with others allows us to rethink our own traditions. Hermeneutics presents the methodology of an open-ended conception of rationality, of an ongoing dialogue and dialectic of truth. The possibility of revision represents the promise of liberalism at its best.

In our age, liberalism has almost become synonymous with democracy. Historically, the flowering and emergence of liberalism has meant a corresponding rise in democratic regimes. Josiah Ober writes: "Among democracy's virtues is revisability- the potential of the political regime to rethink and to reform itself while remaining committed to its core values of justice, equality, dignity, and freedom" (Ober 1994: 149). In light of new "embodiments," we have to constantly attempt to resolve and reconcile tensions (this is the continuing paradox of Enlightenment). I wish to register one important point. In some cases there can be the existence of democracy without liberalism. One need only think of the election of the Nazis by the German people. Also, there may be a sort of liberalism without a democratic power structure. The example of the economic liberalism (without accompanying democracy) of Hong Kong was brought to my attention by Peter Loftson. At any rate, there is certainly a considerable overlap between the notions of democracy and liberalism. The liberal democratic state perhaps best represents the dream of uniting these two notions. It is important though that we do not make the mistake of completely equating these two ideas.

The notion of narrative is important to this thesis and also to Dilthey's analysis of the Greek Enlightenment. The dominant traditional narrative of the Greeks was the Homeric poems. This was a closed horizon of interpretation which did not involve critical examination.

There were no conceptual holes. The narrative was considered to be a coherent whole and not in need of any amendment in the future. It was considered to be in the Rortian sense, a "final vocabulary." The communitarian camp holds that the pluralism of liberal culture must be avoided and a return to traditional values is advocated. The Homeric narrative served this function and gave the Greek people a basis for a coherent and stable definition of the Good life.

The Homeric poems were the closed interpretative horizon of the (early) Greek period. The poems themselves are documents celebrating aristocratic virtues and record a particular division of social space. Dilthey holds that the function of these myths was to "serve a need which goes beyond religious consciousness, that of linking together phenomena of nature and of society and of providing a first kind of explanation of them" (Dilthey 1988: 162). The myths framed and "pictured" reality.

The emerging naturalism of the presocratics in the Greek Enlightenment (I will talk about the modern Enlightenment later) challenged the interpretative horizon of the older age. The Homeric poems were the traditional narrative which preexisted in Greek history. Dilthey traces the unfolding of the Greek Enlightenment by arguing that the emergence of naturalism forced the boundaries of the older narrative to be rethought. Dilthey characterizes the spirit of Enlightenment as that "which presses forward in an endless sea of tradition in search of enlightenment" (Dilthey 1988: 287).

Dilthey characterizes this period of Greek history as one which "extended the sphere dominated by natural explanation and made minds more sceptical about assuming supernatural intervention" (Dilthey 1988: 163). Barnes writes that the presocratics "hit upon that special way of looking at the world which is the scientific or rational way" (Barnes 1987: 16). Perhaps, it would be more accurate to substitute the term naturalistic for scientific.

Barnes (1987) throughout his book, sees the presocratics as doing science, and offers many parallels to modern science. Even so, the presocratics, or the ancient Greeks in general, did not develop a science in the modern sense (i.e. of instrumentally manipulating reality through technology).

In the days of the hegemony of the Homeric poems, the Greeks probably did not seriously question the normative value of the dominant narrative. There was no reflectivity in the traditional narrative of the Homeric poems. The poem changes with the emerging naturalism of the presocratics. There was a constant hermeneutical interplay between the older interpretative horizon and the emerging interpretative horizon of naturalism. Dilthey writes: "The principle from which these first researches [Ionian naturalism] drew conclusions still contained many features of a mythical setting. It included formative power within it akin to mythical forces, capacity for metamorphosis, purposefulness, and, as it were, footprints of the gods in operation" (Dilthey 1988: 166). Thales held that spirits caused movement, whereas "Anaximander's mythical belief was that all things, as they perish, are doing penance and suffering for the injustice of their separate existence in accordance with the temporal order" (Dilthey 1988: 166). The older narrative intersects and changes in relation to the emerging narrative of rationalism: "Replacing primitive ideas by ideas more suited to their objects was ... difficult for this science" (Dilthey 1988: 166).

The Greeks had to reconcile their traditional world view, epitomized in the Homeric poems, with the emerging naturalism and the contacts they had with other peoples. The traditional narrative, the Homeric poems, acts as the basis from which the new mode of understanding is brought forth, which is eventually negated by the newer story. The anthropologies of the presocratics, like those of Anaximander and Xenophanes (Havelock 1957: 36-51), are also an important precursor in the intellectual history of the humanism of the

sophists. They begin the movement away from divine explanation which was especially prominent in the Homeric poems. Plantinga writes: "Man is also historically *aware*, that is to say, he possesses a *historical* consciousness, and this is precisely what enables him to *transcend* (in the sense of see beyond) the conditions of his own history" (Plantinga 1980: 133). We attempt to move beyond, to transcend, in an effort to create expressions of life. Dilthey notes how the rise of naturalism of the Ionians was followed by the rise of democracy: "The colonial cities of Ionia had rapidly advanced towards developing democratic constitutions and toward unleashing their powers" (Dilthey 1988: 164). There appears to be an antinomy between the objectivity of the natural sciences and the pluralism of liberal democracy. The objectivity of the sciences appears to point to a single dominant view. The pluralism of liberal democracy will yield a variety of models all regarded as authentic. At the initial stage of Enlightenment, they both represent the destruction of the traditional narrative.

The stress on the finite nature of our understanding, legitimizes the epistemological foundations of liberalism. Both Heidegger and Heraclitus are reacting to the dialectic of Enlightenment. In a sense, they represent the negative pole of Enlightenment of self creation and autonomy which is paradigmatic of liberal activity. The liberal, including myself, wants to forever rethink the possibilities that are before him or her.

Heidegger was attracted to Heraclitus both because of the openness of interpretative horizons in his position and because of the violent antimetaphysical nature of his work. By antimetaphysical, I mean an openness to a plurality of interpretative horizons. Joanne B. Waugh writes: "Heidegger maintains that the history of Being reached its highest point in Heraclitus, before it went awry with Plato" (Waugh 1991: 605). Heraclitus was the embryotic phase of the impulse to deconstruct the traditional narrative. He attempted to transcend the inherent finite nature of our understanding (fragments 1, 2, 45, 79, 91, 123. Note that

fragments are numbered according to the Diels-Kranz system. cf. Freeman 1948). The liberal can draw upon hermeneutics to construct a theoretical foundation for liberalism. Furthermore, the liberal can stress the inherent finite nature of experience and the variety of interpretations which subsequently emerge. The liberal would argue that all interpretations are inherently finite and also open to revision. I would, however, argue that there has to be some constraint on revision. In the third chapter of this thesis, I will examine the question as to whether the notion of revision should be applied to liberalism in a radical sense.

Heracleitus was against metaphysics, as defined by the Diltheyan sense of closure (or in the Rortian 1992 sense of "final" vocabulary which Waugh herself cites approvingly, Waugh 1991: 607). Joanne B. Waugh writes:

If we read Heracleitus as one who 'does not yet think metaphysically,' that is, as one who is thinking and writing before the literate logocentric tradition fashioned by Plato and Aristotle, the reasons for Nietzsche and Heidegger's admiration may become clearer (Waugh 1991: 613).

Both Nietzsche and Heidegger were against metaphysical thinking and advocated an openness of interpretative horizon. Heracleitus represents an alternate way of thinking for the western tradition. According to Heidegger, this alternative, antimetaphysical way of thinking has been enshrouded by the "forgetfulness of Being."

Both Heracleitus and Heidegger hold that our understanding of truth is contingent and that the real world is in a state of flux. At the same time, Heracleitus (and also Heidegger) stresses the holism of thought as well. Seidel writes:

It was the togetherness of Logos and Physis which in Heidegger's view made the thought of the pre-Socratics truly great. And it was the gradual parting company of this togetherness which account in large measure for the beginning of metaphysics in the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, and hence also of the forgetting of being which has unfortunately characterized the history of western thought since that time (Seidel 1987: 1).

Waugh writes: "In a sense, then Heracleitus represents for 'Western philosophy' the road not taken, one that both Nietzsche and Heidegger seem to think would have been preferable to

that actually followed" (Waugh 1991: 613). In *Being and Time* (Heidegger 1967: especially 41-63), Heidegger deconstructs the history of Being and attempts to provide direction for a new and antimetaphysical way of thinking.

In the Heracleitean/ Heideggerian model of truth, the horizon is always open. An openness in interpretation reveals, however, only one part of Being (or Logos) while the remaining parts are concealed. A central fragment for Heidegger's analysis is: "Nature likes to hide" (fragment 123). The quotation immediately challenges, at least on some level, the concept of objectivity which figures prominently in Enlightenment thought. Heidegger stresses the nature of *physis*: "*Physis* does not mean 'essence' (*das Wesen*) the *ho ti* or the 'what' of things (Heidegger 1975: 113). *Physis* is not a "what," but rather a "how": "The fragment does not think of *physis* as the essence of things, but rather thinks of the essential presencing (verbal) [*Wesen*] of *physis*" (Heidegger 1975: 113). *Physis*, the process of putting finite limitations on infinite Being and logos, is a universal process. Thus, while there is some effort to undermine the "objectivity" of the term, it remains for Heidegger universal. This makes it inherently undogmatic and antimetaphysical: there is an inherent openness to interpretative horizons. *Physis* is functioning in a similar manner to Dilthey's notion of life and Heidegger's notion of ontological difference.

While Heracleitus holds that the real world is always shifting, he also holds that there are certain patterns which occur in change, and that those changes are intelligible to human beings. The pattern, the ever shifting interpretation of reality, is given an image by Heracleitus. That image is "fire." It is the substratum, the ground, upon which all interpretations weave together. The image of the river also serves a similar function. Cherniss writes:

The meaning behind phenomena that he had so discovered was not only that the whole world is a process and nothing else, a process that had no beginning and will never have an end, but that all things are one because the process has an ineluctable order, the order being a fixed proportion of change (Cherniss 1951: 333).

In the essay "On the Essence of Truth," Heidegger writes: "To let be- that is, to let beings be as the beings which they are- means to engage oneself with the open region and its openness into which every being comes to stand, bringing that openness, as it were, along with itself" (Heidegger 1977: 127). According to Heidegger, truth occurs in the open, finite field. Any revealing, or method of revealing, is a "clearing" wherein Being can reveal itself. Dilthey, like Heidegger and Heracleitus, attacked the idea of metaphysics which he characterizes as a struggle for "firm foundations" (Dilthey 1988: 149). An openness of interpretative horizons, which is the essence of liberalism, can be viewed as the path, the string of possibilities, that the tradition of Western philosophy has neglected. The main tradition in Western political philosophy has been the espousal of metaphysical approaches. Consequently, the vigour of the modern communitarian position should be seen as a logical historical development. Both modern communitarians and the central western political tradition advocate a metaphysical closure of interpretation of horizons against a liberal openness of interpretative horizons.

Havelock, while he does not argue that Heracleitus can be useful for liberalism, argues and persuasively demonstrates that there was a great spirit of liberalism in Greece which has often been underrated and ignored:

Liberalism is a part of the intellectual history of classic Greece, but it is not part of those political concepts which have hitherto been accepted in the West as classic, as typically Greek, as the expression, definitive and complete, of a unique Greek experience of citizenship in the city-state (Havelock 1957: 11).

The sophistic movement has been continually discredited by the tradition of Western philosophy. Given the academic monopoly throughout the ages which celebrated Plato and Aristotle, there must be a vigorous and robust rethinking of Greek liberalism. Cynthia Farrar, not unlike Havelock (1957), wants to reconstruct ancient liberalism "from behind the shadows

cast by Plato and Aristotle, and by our own preconceptions" (Farrar 1988: 1). Plato and Aristotle, because of the closure in their interpretative horizon, represent a communitarian-like position. Liberalism is only possible when a people becomes aware of the limitations of its tradition.

The paradox of Enlightenment is the tension between *nomos* and *physis*. Barker lucidly describes the paradox of Enlightenment:

Nature abode by one law, and men hovered between many. Physics and anthropology stood opposed to one another, and their opposition issued in the antithesis of natural law and human custom. It is partly, perhaps, in this way that an antithesis came to be made between two terms one of which comes from the study of science, and the other from that of human institutions (Barker 1964: 65).

This runs parallel to the hermeneutical distinction between the human and natural sciences.

Nomos "contrasted with what is natural and universal" (Guthrie 1969: v. 3: 227).

The thrust of liberalism in Greece was to challenge the *nomos* of the interpretative community. However, this is a process which takes time, and certain historical conditions have to be there if the deconstruction and reconstruction of tradition is to take place.

Havelock writes: "*Nomos* is not like a piece of property which you could abandon or pick up again at will" (Havelock 1957: 139). Sometimes liberals, like Sartrean existentialists, have been accused of supporting flippancy revisionism. At the drop of a hat, as some communitarians hold, liberals can radically change positions and ideas (and conceptions about political and moral matters). Havelock continues: "It [*nomos*] is painfully acquired; it makes total sense when you have it; but when you lose it, it becomes a lost cause" (Havelock 1957: 139). The questioning of societal narratives is a slow and arduous process. However, once traditional values have been questioned, it becomes exceedingly difficult to go back (the neo-Aristotelian dream). Once interpretative horizons have been smashed open with the hammer of freedom, reconciliation is virtually impossible.

Democritus attempted to resolve the gulf between *physis* and *nomos*. At the same time he acknowledged the fact that we can never grasp reality in its totality: "It will be obvious that it is impossible to understand how in reality each thing is" (fragment 8. cf. Freeman 1948. All presocratic fragments in this thesis come from this source). In another fragment, he acknowledges that the Homeric poems were a coherent story about reality: "Homer, having been gifted with divine nature, built an ordered structure of manifold verse" (fragment 21). According to Democritus, within the Homeric poems there is coherent narrative about reality, but according to him it is not a sufficient notion of adequacy of interpretation. But this picture (description) of reality is not sufficient as it has no notion of adequacy of interpretation. There is no notion of constraint or an external justification of the narrative. In the spirit of Greek Enlightenment, however, Democritus was not content with this. Democritus attempted to provide a notion of adequacy for narratives. He wanted to put constraints upon narratives. Unlike his postmodern successors, such as Rorty who sees no need for constraint, Democritus wanted to constrain narratives by an appeal to objectivity and normativity. It is not enough to merely acknowledge the existence of a narrative. Rather, one must attempt to justify it with a naturalistic explanation. If we follow Democritus on this, what Homer intended was not an objective justification of a narrative, but rather a narrative which exists in an insular manner, apart from any attempt to justify it.

Using this rationale, we can see the Homeric poems were, for Democritus, merely a creation of the human mind and not a reflection of reality. Democritus acknowledged that the human mind creates narratives which are fragments of the larger reality. He writes: "Man is a universe in little [*Microcosm*]" (fragment 34). As such, there is a difference between human constructions about reality and reality itself. The inherent incomplete nature of our explanations about reality is echoed in another fragment: "We know nothing in reality; for truth

lies in an abyss" (fragment 117). Farrar writes: "By uniting atomism and anthropology, Democritus revealed man's nature as a creature of both cosmos and *polis*" (Farrar 1988: 197). Democritus lived and wrote in the climate of flowering Greek liberalism. Democritus endorsed an open-ended conception of rationality. In the writings of Democritus, who accordingly may be viewed as important in the background of liberal theory, there was an inherent tension between the positive and negative poles of Enlightenment.

Materialist atomism was important for his liberalism. Havelock characterizes Democritus' doctrine of atomism as describing "patterns not produced in response to eternal verities nor directed by an all-powerful providence, but rather themselves producing a series of problems with which atomic man has to wrestle ..." (Havelock 1957: 154). Human beings must recreate themselves to be freed from the drudgery of tradition. Farrar speaks of the "normative constraints" (Farrar 1988: 192) of Democritus' atomism. Democritus (fragment 124) points to a "picture of man as having a basic nature" (Farrar 1988: 202). The notion of human nature is important for both liberalism and hermeneutics. Democritus moves towards a reconciliation between objectivity and pluralism. Like nature itself, there is a patterning in the manner in which we construct narratives: "Those whose character is well-ordered have also a well-ordered life" (fragment 61). Democritus wants to link his atomistic, naturalistic explanation with the manner in which we live our lives.

Havelock holds that Antiphon's "fierce naturalistic rejection of classes and orders in society must have sharpened the focus of egalitarian theory in the fourth century" (Havelock 1957: 381). Havelock characterizes Antiphon's notion of law as "a non-natural compact or convention" (Havelock 1957: 401). Antiphon's contract theory has similarities to both Rousseau and Rawls. Havelock adds also that "liberals accepted this, but deleted the qualification 'non-natural' " (Havelock 1957: 401). Instead of being externally objective or

natural, many liberals turn to a merely intersubjective justification which they rationalize as "contract theory." Antiphon challenged the status quo and the limitations of *nomos*, as well as the contingent nature of societal constructions. Kurt Raaflaub notes that

... the discrepancy perceived by some Sophists between the law of nature (*physis*) and man-made laws or conventions (*nomoi*). This discrepancy seemed particularly noticeable in the clash between the strong individual's natural claims to unrestrained power and the restrictions imposed on him by the community's norm (Raaflaub 1994: 123).

Antiphon rejects both objective and the intersubjective constraints. In doing so, he creates something similar to the Nietzschean strong man who must create his own essence and his own social reality. Neither *nomos* (intersubjective norms) nor *physis* (objective laws of nature) should constrain him. Power and the ability to create one's self thus becomes synonymous with *physis* itself. In fragment 44, Antiphon writes:

Justice, then, is not to transgress that which is the law of the city in which one is a citizen. A man therefore can best conduct himself in harmony with justice, if when in the company of witnesses he upholds the laws, and without the witnesses he upholds the edicts of nature. For the edicts of the laws are imposed artificially, but those of nature are compulsory. And the edicts of the laws are arrived at by consent, not by natural growth, whereas those of nature are not a matter of consent (fragment 44).

Farrar writes: "Unlike Protagoras, Antiphon believes that man's interests are asocial" (Farrar 1988: 117). Antiphon has somewhat of the Nietzschean "will to power." Society constrains individuals: "Man's freedom consists in heeding his nature and pursuing his own advantage. *Nomoi* are contingent and arbitrary as well as coercive, and it is *physis* which makes for order as well as freedom" (Farrar 1988: 117).

By contrast, Protagoras believes that the nature of man is inherently social and that there is a shared system of understanding. Protagoras' slogan, "Man is the measure of all things," points to the extreme negative pole of Enlightenment with a definite orientation towards intersubjectivity. Undoubtedly, Protagoras argues against any form of "conceptual monism" (or political metaphysics), but also argues that this advocacy of pluralism does not have to lead to relativism. Kerferd suggests an almost hermeneutical interpretation of

Protagoras' doctrine. Protagoras offers us a positive picture, and a thick theory of liberalism. Kerferd notes that the doctrine of man being the measure of all things can be interpreted as capturing different aspects of an objective reality (Kerferd 1989: 86-87). A similar argument can be discerned in the *Theaetetus*. The thrust of it is that there does not have to be an extreme relativism attributed to Protagoras. Instead, the fact that I experience X in such a manner and you experience X in a different manner need not mean that our interpretations are incommensurable, but rather that they capture different aspects of X.

Protagoras' hermeneutical doctrine of truth is not diametrically opposed to Platonic dialectic. Farrar questions Plato's reading of Protagoras:

As a claim about the human basis of knowledge rather than a thoroughgoing epistemological relativism ('no one judges what's false'), Protagorean theory can readily accommodate the existence of men who are 'wise' because they are experienced, and perceptive about the experience of others. They know the truth, but not a truth independent of human existence (Farrar 1988: 71).

One of the problems of getting textual evidence for Protagoras, and the sophists in general, is that the majority of his work survives in the writings of Plato, the sophists' greatest detractor. Nonetheless, there is enough evidence to guide us in our interpretation if we critically examine the sources by engaging in a hermeneutics of suspicion. In any case, the notion of Protagoras as a hyper-relativist is not sound. Implicit in his position is the notion of a contextualized, intersubjective grounding of our interpretations of reality. Havelock notes that "the technique of 'holding dialogue', as sophists understood and practiced it, includes the negotiation of opinion, the meeting of minds in discussion and the finding of common ground" (Havelock 1957: 223).

Protagoras, unlike Antiphon, holds that there is a shared mode of understanding for a community. Because of Protagoras' assumption of a democratic polity, there is a corresponding thickness to any conception of the Good generated by his system of thought.

In many ways, Antiphon represents the caricature of liberals so common in some communitarian writing, such as Taylor's "Atomism." Protagoras, however, holds that our experience of reality is lived and that we share certain assumptions as communities. At the very least, we have the capacity to exchange narratives with each other. Protagoras, who was living in democratic Athens, took democracy as a given and his manner of interpreting reality (as found in the *Theaetetus*) provides a theoretical foundation for liberalism. We, as individuals and as members of interpretative communities, always interpret reality from different perspectives. Instead of being characterized, as Plato describes us, as dwelling in the cave, the land of appearance, we can see that we are inherently bound and guided by the narratives that society provides for us.

Protagoras can be seen as an ancient precursor to Richard Rorty. Both hold that there are no objective constraints on our interpretations of reality. Both are hostile to the notion of metaphysics and to the closure of interpretative horizons. Protagoras sees interpretation, as not constrained by naturalistic explanation, but rather by intersubjective limitations. There is no notion of external justification, but rather both liberals, Protagoras and Rorty, advocate a coherence doctrine of truth. The famous slogan of Protagoras summarizes this position: "Of all things the measure is Man, of the things that are, that they are, and of the things that are not, that they are not" (fragment 1).

Regardless of their intersubjective nature, there are nonetheless constraints in Protagoras' system of knowledge. The liberal society in which Protagoras lived provided a thick background for the individuals of Athens. The society provides the backdrop for speculations about the Good life, and liberalism. The *modus vivendi* in Athens was taken for granted. However, from this shared pool of collective understanding, it was the individual Athenians who helped reshape collective understanding. Consequently, it was the individual

who helped redefine the narrative of the society. There was a dialectic, as Kymlicka's theory of liberalism holds (and mine as well though with differences), between the individual and the community. Assessing the merits of Athenian democracy, Farrar writes: "All citizens were thought to be capable of appreciating and feeling the connection between their interests and those of the community because they were constantly, as active political participants, asked to assess and interpret this connection" (Farrar 1988: 275).

The connection between the individual and community is a central issue for liberalism, but it is also implicated in the concept of a hermeneutical conversation. The hermeneutical conversation is always growing, always incorporating new pools and streams to the totality of the objectifications of mind. Hajo Holborn writes of the Diltheyan hermeneutical enterprise: "New objectifications of life may wither in time, but they add a new meaning to life as a whole. For life itself grows, and it grows through man" (Holborn 1950: 118). Life grows because human beings are always interpreting life from different perspectives. Dilthey stressed the negative pole of Enlightenment, that of self-creation and that of the negation of the traditional narrative. Holborn writes: "Dilthey praised the Enlightenment for its confidence in the power of human reason and its secular interpretation of the world." (Holborn 1950: 97). But Dilthey's hermeneutical conversation lacks the constraint of materiality such as is found in the work of Habermas. Holborn notes that Dilthey received recognition for his "resurrection of German idealism" (Holborn 1950: 90). It is the idealistic limitations of the hermeneutical method that I will challenge in the second chapter. This line of thought will be fleshed out more thoroughly in the third chapter.

Plato, like the sophists, attacked the Homeric poems, but with very different motives and results. Plato's attack on the sophists led him to a closure of interpretative horizons as he attempted to reconstruct a narrative from the elements which had been deconstructed. The

narrative of the Homeric poems was deconstructed by means of two impulses: 1) the naturalism of the presocratics, and 2) the sophistic, liberal movement. The sophists had attacked the traditional narrative, culminating in the most radical sophists in a movement towards a belief in opening, and freedom. Plato's function in the Enlightenment dialectic was that he was moving back towards closure, the same sort of closure which existed in the Homeric poems. In contrast to the "negativity" of the sophistic liberal movement, Plato attempts to thicken the notion of the Good.

Plato appeals to the meta-concepts of objectivity and authority in an attempt to ground his narrative. Plato attacks, like Aristotle, Greek liberalism and also indirectly the opening of the interpretative horizon. Plato wants to fill in the negativity of the Greek liberals, which was brought about by deconstruction, with "positivity," with some measure of thickness. Plato offers an exhaustive and exclusive account of the Good. Aristotle, and to a lesser degree Plato, are often used as precedents for attacks on contemporary liberalism. Their theories are, in turn, an attempt to provide a theoretical foundation for communitarianism. Both Aristotle and Plato advocate a closure of interpretative horizons which results in metaphysics in a Diltheyan sense.

Plato characterizes the sophists as "those who wander in the region of the many and variable and are not philosophers" (Plato 1989: 174). Plato refers to the education of the sophists as the soil which brings forth the "motley multitude" of the masses (Plato 1989: 184). The sophists teach nothing "but the opinion of the many" (Plato 1989: 183). Throughout *The Republic*, Plato contrasts appearance (sometimes represented as found in the views of the sophists) with reality (as that found in his own position). Appearance is characterized as "opinion" (Plato 1989: 201). Plato characterizes appearance as "the twilight of becoming and perishing" (Plato 1989: 201). He continues to say that the lives of the many are "mere

shadows and pictures of the true" (Plato 1989: 289). Plato implies that the liberal is sceptical about the Good. The democratic state is a "lawless life, which by his seducers is termed perfect liberty" (Plato 1989: 265).

Within this representation, there are no standards for the Good life (a common complaint of both communitarian and communitarian-like thinkers). We hear echoes of this sentiment in our own age with the meteoric rise of the right wing in the Canadian west and also by the takeover of the Republican party in the United States by the religious right. Liberalism (and democracy) is equated with immorality and licentiousness. Plato, like many modern communitarians, sees liberalism as a threat to moral order which could lead to social disintegration. He adds to his description that democracy is "full of variety and disorder" (Plato 1989: 250). Plato, in relation to the philosophy of the sophists, was "guilty of philosophical propaganda" (Havelock 1957: 213). By contrast, Plato speaks of the philosopher as "holding converse with the divine order" (Plato 1989: 192). Thus, the system of knowledge, and in turn the political order advocated by Plato, seeks to justify things in terms of a divine order rather than in terms of the human standards of the sophists. There is a dialectical movement backwards from the sophistic system of intersubjective justification, towards the older presocratic approach of justifying the political system on cosmological arguments. The Platonic dialectic move is not entirely unlike the modern communitarians' appeal to arguments involving communal standards.

While there may be certain aspects of Plato's political project which are disturbing to the liberal temperament, Plato's methodology does have certain hermeneutical and liberal possibilities as well. The emphasis on process in his dialectical methodology goes against a metaphysical conception of reality, and in turn of substantialism and essentialism. The hermeneutical method is a dialectical method; it is an ongoing conversation. Gadamer

characterizes dialectic in the following manner: "Dialectic, as the art of asking questions, proves itself only because the person who knows how to ask the questions is able to persist in his questioning, which involves being able to preserve his orientation towards openness" (Gadamer 1975: 330). Gadamer adds to this by saying: "Dialectic as the art of conducting a conversation is also the art of seeing things in the unity of an aspect (*sunoram eis hen eidos*) i.e. it is the art of the formation of concepts as the working out of common meaning" (Gadamer 1975: 330). There is a shared ground of common meaning through which the conversation can take place.

The work of Aristotle represents the next stage of the Greek Enlightenment. He seeks to resolve the apparent paradox of Enlightenment: that of objectivity and pluralism. Aristotle distinguishes between theoretical (universal) knowledge and practical knowledge (local). By examining the communitarianism of Aristotle, we can move effectively to a deconstruction of the communitarianism of our age. There seems to be an irreconcilable difference between the theoretical (universal) and the practical (local). Objectivity, represented by the theoretical, clashes with pluralism which is represented by the practical (the embodied experience). The practical relates to the particular, whereas the theoretical relates to the universal. Aristotle writes: "Nor is practical wisdom concerned with universals only ..." (Aristotle 1947: 433). Aristotle adds that "practice is concerned with particulars" (Aristotle 1947: 433). In addition, Aristotle claims: "That practical wisdom is not scientific knowledge is evident; for it is ... concerned with ultimate particular fact ..." (Aristotle 1947: 433-434). Gadamer comments on Aristotle's thought: "Practical reason is far removed from any universal teleology" (Gadamer 1986: 160).

Aristotle separates the theoretical sciences from the practical sciences. His position mirrors, in many ways, the tensions in Enlightenment thought. The theoretical element

denotes mainly such concepts as necessity and objectivity. One could, in the case of Aristotle, also employ the term 'natural' to create various hierarchies: 1) between freemen and slaves (Aristotle 1947: 561, 559), 2) between Greeks and non-Greeks (Aristotle 1947: 607), 3) between men and women (Aristotle 1947: 560-561), and 4) between human beings and nature (Aristotle 1947: 556, 431). Aristotle's metaphysics of essentialism enables him, however, to fall into the trap of assigning essences to different groups of people. His system orientates towards substantialism because every entity has a certain function (*telos*) which is deterministic and inescapable. Aristotle uses this idea to justify the ordering of Greek society which supported the creation of hierarchies and the suppression of various classes of people.

Aristotle, like those in the hermeneutical tradition, applies two different methodologies to these different object domains. Thus, there is a dichotomy between the poles of Enlightenment: that of objectivity (the universal) and that of pluralism (the particular). While Aristotle does separate the theoretical from the practical, he does not resolve the paradox of Enlightenment. He creates a pluralism of standards for rationality (different communal narratives), but it is also impossible for these standards to be compared, resulting in a commensurability problem. The assumption of the plurality of community standards is the main thrust of communitarian theory.

Communitarians, both modern (Beiner, MacIntyre and Taylor) and ancient (Aristotle) hold that there is only one rational solution, one conception of the Good life, to be found for each situation (each state of circumstance). Each location (to use MacIntyre's term) has its own proper *telos*. The communitarian position is especially metaphysical because of its closure of interpretative horizons (this is, incidentally, what Dilthey means by metaphysics and I will follow him in this usage). Aristotle uses *nomos* and *ethos* to constrain the self-created individual of the sophists which was powered by *physis*. The attempt at closure by Aristotle

represents the move to place this thinness in some context and give the moral vocabulary some body. Aristotle wants to return to a narrative similar to that of the pre-enlightenment age. He wants a conceptual monism, with no conceptual holes. In short, he wants a closure of interpretative horizons.

Gadamer writes of Aristotle that "every existent thing is 'good' when it fulfils its telos (purpose, goal)" (Gadamer 1986: 177). There is nothing outside the goal which constrains it, but rather the goal itself is the justification. The society, not the individual (as in the case of Anglo-American liberalism), is the *telos*. Aristotle writes: "Every state is a community of some kind, and every community is established with a view to some good" (Aristotle 1947: 533). Aristotle states quite clearly that he does not envision a universal conception of the Good, but rather that every human community has its own entirely valid conception of the Good. Aristotle holds that there is a plurality of interpretative horizons, but within each of these interpretative horizons there is a sense of closure. The self is made thick with an almost deterministic tie to the communal narrative of its society. While Aristotle's notion of localized conceptions of the Good might be too excessively thick, he does rightly attack excessively thin theories of the Good. Aristotle provides insight when he describes the Platonic idea (form of the Good): "Or is good nothing other than the good itself? In that case the Form will be empty" (Aristotle 1947: 315).

I concur with Aristotle on the point that this notion of the good needs to be "filled out." The Good cannot exist in abstract, universal terms, but rather exists in specific location: "The good, therefore, is not some common element answerable to one Idea" (Aristotle 1947: 315). The Good is the proper and the rational solution of a given political situation. The Good cannot be defined universally, but rather needs a context in order to be fleshed out. The Good "cannot be something universally presenting all cases and single" (Aristotle 1947: 314).

Gadamer concludes: "He means that we must start with our practice itself and the living awareness that we have in it what is *homologgume* on (agreed upon) as good" (Gadamer 1986: 162).

Aristotle's philosophy stresses embodied and lived experience, and hence, is similar to Dilthey and others in the hermeneutical tradition. This contrasts with the more universalistic pretensions of Rawls' original position. Aristotle's position is situational and defined by the context of a specific location. The stress on practice, at least at some level, accentuates pluralism. There is a pluralism of interpretative horizons, but not an additional pluralism of possibilities for each interpretative horizon. This difference is extremely important and I will return to it later. The difficulty with this approach is that it tends to more of a description of local practice than an attempt to critically analyze it.

Aristotle attempts to resolve this apparent paradox of Enlightenment by making the distinction between "legal" and "natural." The natural is that "which everywhere has the same force and does not exist by people's thinking this or that ..." (Aristotle 1947: 413). Similarly, the "natural," not being a mere societal construction, comes with a certain objective determination. On the other hand, the legal is "that which is originally indifferent, but when it has been laid down is not indifferent ..." (Aristotle 1947: 413). The natural forms the core, and helps to ground any notion of metanarrative. This section, book XV: chapter 7, implies quite strongly the notion of conceptual holes. For Aristotle, there is an inherent difference between the objective reality of laws and our interpretation of the reality of these laws. Politics is placed within history. Aristotle does not distinguish between the legal and the natural and consequently does not resolve the paradox of Enlightenment.

In another passage, Aristotle admits to the presence of conceptual holes in laws: "In those cases, in which it is necessary to speak universally, but not possible to do so correctly,

the law takes the usual case though it is not ignorant of the possibility of error" (Aristotle 1947: 421). The law accommodates the influx of new experiences, by bending to their particular circumstances: "... the rule adapts itself to the shape of the stone, and is not rigid, and so too the decree is adapted, to the facts" (Aristotle 1947: 421). Law occurs inside history and, changes consistently in the light of the phenomenological possibilities of new experience.

Once again, Aristotle approaches the notion of conceptual holes: "There is a ... combination of qualities in good men who differ from any individual of the many ... because in them the scattered elements are combined" (Aristotle 1947: 597). This implies that the conception of the Good requires the natures of many individuals to construct it. This combination would be embodied in one person. A sort of hermeneutical conversation is necessary in order for there to be a full and complete picture of the Good life. Aristotle uses a metaphor to explicate this point: "And as a feast to which all the guests contribute is better than a banquet, furnished by a single man, so a multitude is a better judge of many things than any individual" (Aristotle 1947: 610). A hermeneutical conversation allows conceptual holes to be filled. Aristotle continues: "Let us assume that they are the freemen, and that they never act in violation of the law, but fill in the gaps which the law is obliged to leave" (Aristotle 1947: 610). Individuals can bridge their differences, with a dialogue between them.

Communitarians, such as Aristotle, fall into the problem of justification. The sophists, and their modern offshoots such as Rorty,¹ have no external justification for the validity of the narratives that they are telling. I include Aristotle in this because in his political and ethical writings there is no attempt to analyze the narratives using metastandards, but rather only a description occurs. The narratives of these communitarians are self-contained. The narratives use themselves to justify their own normativity. The question is begged because the justification itself is the object which ought to be justified. The problem with this approach to

morality and politics, which I will elaborate later, is that it becomes nothing more than a justification of the status quo. It is a description rather than a critical examination. However, this is justified by an appeal to the normative standards of the community. Who determines normative standards in Aristotle? Is it the elite of the society? How is that a consensus? Is it the religious leaders of a community? These questions must be examined.

As I have already stated, it is the elite (or those who have knowledge) in Aristotle who define or determine the Good. Aristotle writes:

Therefore he who bids the law rule may be deemed to bid God and Reason alone rule, but he who bids man rule adds an element of the beast; for desire is a wild beast, and passion perverts the minds of rulers even when they are the best of men. The law is reason unaffected by desire (Aristotle 1947: 613).

"Reason" is, as I see it, a rhetorical term here, used to justify an elitist conception of the Good. Aristotle betrays the aristocratic and elitist bias in his work: "... democrats identify with the status of freemen, supporters of oligarchy with wealth (or with noble birth) and supporters of aristocracy with excellence" (Aristotle 1947: 203).

Excellence (*arête*) is effectively equivalent to hierarchy, and we must be careful to note that modern communitarians are implying similar notions with their moral vocabulary. Aristotle adds: "For a right election can only be made by those who have knowledge..." (Aristotle 1947: 598). Some of Aristotle's remarks against the masses are quite stark: "Now the masses of mankind are evidently quite slavish in their taste, preferring a life suitable to beasts" (Aristotle 1947: 312). Aristotle holds that happiness is the proper *telos* of political and moral life: "Happiness ... is something final and self-sufficient, and is the end of action" (Aristotle 1947: 317). He adds that happiness "comes as a result of virtue and some process of learning or training ..." (Aristotle 1947: 322). But the problem remains: who gets to define happiness? Aristotle does not articulate what it would be in concrete terms, but rather defines it only in vague terms. Happiness will be defined by the elite of the community and it is they who will

determine the standards of excellence for a community.

The modern communitarian has the same conception of the Good life. It is not enough for the modern communitarian, essentially a neo-Aristotelian, to apologetically explain away Aristotle's endorsement of slavery by blaming it on historical circumstances. The sophists, the Greek liberals such as Antiphon, violently attacked the notion of slavery in Greek society. Do the elite, including philosophers who are leading the contemplative life, acquire this on the backs of the oppressed? Did the Indians of the Americas have to experience near genocide in order to fuel the European industrial revolution? (The resources taken from the New World were an important factor in the development of the industrial revolution). The same sort of apologetic line could be used today: we need a vast underclass (In Saskatchewan this is overwhelmingly aboriginal) in order to maintain the economic prosperity of others (mostly Anglos). Clearly such rhetoric has to be exploded in order to arrive at a fair and critical conception of justice.

I have taken the time to discuss the Greek Enlightenment extensively to point out the general dialectic of Enlightenment. Also, it is important to examine Aristotle's historical relationship to modern communitarians who attack liberals and use Aristotle as a source of authority and justification. Havelock comments on the importance that Aristotle has had in the Western tradition: "Aristotle has exercised over the Western mind a moral authority not unlike that which has been wielded by the Old Testament and for essentially the same reasons" (Havelock 1957: 376). One cannot overestimate the incalculable influence that Platonism and Aristotelianism have had upon the shaping of western culture and the western mind.

MacIntyre is not against a plurality of traditions in *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*, but rather, like Aristotle, is against a plurality of standards within a historical space (a "location"). He argues against the second form of pluralism by invoking Aristotle's principle of

non-contradiction (MacIntyre 1988: 4), which, unless supplemented, is a rather simplistic way of attacking pluralism. MacIntyre pushes for conceptual monism (by this I mean that there is dominant narrative operative within a given location) and a sense of closure in the interpretative horizon, while stressing the positive pole of Enlightenment with no conceptual holes in the narrative. He argues against the universalistic claims of Enlightenment, and instead argues for a local sense of rationality. Agreement of moral vocabulary is essential, according to MacIntyre, if political life is to be possible. The pluralism of liberalism is the target here.

I have characterized Aristotle as a conceptual monist. Beiner, a communitarian, attacks the particular interpretation of Aristotle that I am presenting. He writes that "the great strength of Aristotle's ethics is its wonderful sensitivity to the complexity and multidimensionality of human ethical experience" (Beiner 1992: 59). Aristotle simply gives us a plurality of standards without providing variety, as each location has its most dominant narrative. Aristotle's ethical and political thought is nothing more than an apology for the status quo. Beiner writes: "That is why the liberals' charge of monism against Aristotle is so grotesque" (Beiner 1992: 59). Once we sort out what we mean by pluralism, as I have attempted to do, the charge of monism against Aristotle, which I level, is sound and reasonable. Beiner characterizes positions such as mine (e.g. that Aristotle is a conceptual monist) as "impotent moralism" (Beiner 1992: 63). In positions such as Beiner's and Aristotle's, there is an attempt for a closure of interpretative horizons and to have one conception of the good for each location. For Aristotle, the bedrock of this is the *polis* and for Beiner it is the state.

MacIntyre wants to use Aristotle to construct a thick picture of the Good which runs counter to the Rawlsian picture of the Good. In the wake of the deconstruction of the tradition, MacIntyre seeks to construct a conceptual monism which will repel the "dark forces" of

liberalism and pluralism. MacIntyre writes that "the Aristotelian tradition can be restated in a way that restores the rationality and intelligibility to our own moral and social attitudes and commitments" (MacIntyre 1988: ix; passage originally in *After Virtue*). He sees hope in a hermeneutical conversation with the past (e.g. with Aristotle), but not in a conversation in the present. MacIntyre creates a good guy ("the Aristotelian" tradition), bad guy ("the anti-Aristotelian") dichotomy (MacIntyre 1988: 100). The anti-Aristotelian are represented by the "sophists and Thucydides" (MacIntyre 1988: 100). The Aristotelian tradition that MacIntyre supports represents the communitarian camp, whereas the anti-Aristotelian tradition represents the liberal camp. By invoking Aristotle as a theoretical foundation for his communitarianism, and by discrediting ancient liberalism, he is attacking modern liberalism in an indirect way.

Instead of providing a critical examination of a society, both MacIntyre and Aristotle (and other communitarians) merely describe the moral vocabulary of a given interpretative horizon (a culture or political entity of some kind). Their theory of both the Good and the self becomes too thick. People seem to blindly follow roles that have been predestined for them by their society. Nowhere in the ontology of communitarianism does the option exist for the individual self to critically examine his or her society. Rather, the narratives of a society are taken as ontological assumptions with little room to revise them. This works to the advantage of the conservative who benefits from the status quo. It does nothing for the individual and the collective of individuals whom the system does not benefit.

The essentialism of both Aristotle and MacIntyre implies that each entity has its proper place in the schema of things, making their systems teleological. MacIntyre writes: "For the *polis* is human community perfected and complete by achieving its *telos*, and the essential nature of each thing is what it is when it achieves its *telos*" (MacIntyre 1988: 97). The problem

with the communitarian position (which itself represents a certain phase of the Enlightenment dialectic) is that it begs the question of justification which I have already discussed. MacIntyre writes: "A violation of the bonds of the community by the offender has to be recognized for what it is by the community, if the community is not itself to fail" (MacIntyre 1981: 151). MacIntyre implies that if there is a sense of pluralism, the community will collapse; if an individual questions the mores of a society, then it will collapse.

There are two possible interpretations of MacIntyre's position. In one sense, perhaps the most harmless interpretation, the Good life is seen as nothing more than a meaningless notion. The other sense, which I think MacIntyre implies, advocates a kind of right-wing reactionary government or community which has only one narrative to guide moral decisions. According to his position, if there is only one standard, then there cannot be any disputes about what should be considered rational. He calls "the numerous alternative modes of ordering" a "modern account" (MacIntyre 1988: 133). But clearly the possibility of pluralism is not strictly a modern phenomenon, as the Greek liberals, the sophists, advocated their ideas contemporaneously with Plato and Aristotle. MacIntyre characterizes Aristotle against the liberal: "...Aristotle is *the* protagonist against whom I have matched the voices of liberal modernity..." (MacIntyre 1981: 146).

Beiner attempts to answer the question of what one can glean from Aristotle that will be relevant to the modern audience. Beiner writes: "My answer is that Aristotle makes available to us above all is a certain vocabulary, a language in which to discuss and debate our ethical and political concerns, and that in the realm of morals and politics, vocabulary matters" (Beiner 1992: 74). Throughout his book *What is the Matter with Liberalism?*, Beiner attacks much that is essential to the ontology of liberalism, including the key notions of pluralism and rights and invokes the authority of Aristotle to buttress his position. He notes:

One of the chief theoretical advantages of an Aristotelian moral language is that it allows one to speak of moral and political phenomena without having to resort to the reductive notion of "values," whether individual or collective (Beiner 1992: 40).

Beiner is appealing to the objective aspect of Aristotle's thought. But, as I already pointed out, the apparent tension between objectivity and incommensurable pluralism is unresolved.

I think that we can take from Aristotle the notion of embodied experience, but his endorsement of slavery and "natural" order are fundamentally problematic. Before moving to this problematic, I want to say that the original position of Rawls avoids the local in favour of the universal as I will argue later. The original position is too vague and needs to be supplemented in a manner similar to Plato's notion of the Good. Through Aristotle's notion of lived experience, we can draw attention to the localized nature of narratives. The self is given a content and engages in a hermeneutical conversation with other selves about the Good. This positive picture can of course be modified as one engages in conversation with other people within society. In this way, we can link the hermeneutical project of Dilthey with Aristotle. Dilthey's stress on the interchange between the I and Thou is exactly what I am speaking of with the notion of hermeneutical conversation. At the same time, I want to use this link to bring light to the debate between liberalism and communitarianism.

I shall now to address the problematic of objectivity in Aristotle and discuss how it relates to the American Indian. It is my goal to cast doubt on the communitarian project by showing some of the ideological consequences of Aristotle's theory. I want to turn to the examination of how some of Aristotle's views have been applied in the context of the aboriginal people of North America. Aristotle has been used to justify the natural orderings of different races; Aristotle has been used as a legitimization of the hierarchical relations between different classes of different people. Throughout the history of contact between aboriginal people and European people (including the present day), aboriginal people of the

Americas have been characterized as being irrational. In the medieval and renaissance periods, Aristotle was the central figure in western philosophy.

The Spanish attempted to sort out theoretically the issues involved in their domination and conquest of the peoples of the Americas. A great debate arose between Las Casas and Sepulveda at Valladolid in 1550-1551. Las Casas was sympathetic to Indians and argued on their behalf, whereas Sepulveda argued that Indians should be subjected to Spanish domination. Lewis Hanke summarizes the position of the Spanish jurist Juan Glines de Sepulveda who used Aristotelian doctrine of natural slavery which is "that one part of mankind is set aside by nature to be slaves in the service of a master..." (Hanke 1975: 13). The medieval Spanish clergyman wanted non-Spaniards to do hard labour. In an analogous manner, the elite of ancient Greece wanted other, "lower" classes of people to do manual labour. The Aristotelian "doctrine of natural slavery" was first applied by John Major in 1510 (Hanke 1975: 14). Also, Sepulveda's doctrine was not novel because Victoria in *De Indis* "analyzed and refuted it long before Sepulveda espoused it" (Hanke 1975: 22). Sepulveda was "one of the best trained minds of his time" and had "just completed and published ... his Latin translation of Aristotle's *Politics*" (Hanke 1975: 31). Sepulveda "was probably the foremost Aristotelian in Spain" (Hanke 1975: 59). On the other hand, Las Casas was armed with years of experience living with American Indians and "with his own *Apologia*" (Hanke 1975: 39).

While he did not participate in the debate, Fernando Vazquez opposed the implementation and use of Aristotelian values on to the Indians. Hanke writes: "In the introduction to this work he struck a blow at those who invoked Aristotle's theory of slavery by asserting that "men try to cover their wars with a cloak of justice" (Hanke 1975: 81). Vazquez is noting that the term *justice* is being used to legitimate the discourse of, what are in fact,

unjust practices. The existing conception of the good is taken to be "like a cloak." Other conceptions of the Good are downgraded. Vazquez de Menchaca adds: "...they seek to justify this tyranny with fictitious names, describing it as a doctrine beneficial to those who suffer vexations, whereas in reality never has anything been heard or seen farther from the truth and more worthy of scorn and derision" (Alcade 1931. cf. Hanke 1975: 81-82). The use of Aristotle by the Spanish apologists for the enslavement of the Indians is an anticipation of things to come. Rafael Arevalo Martinez goes as far as to compare Sepulveda's racial doctrines with Hitler's (Martinez 1975: 3-4. cf. Hanke 1975: 95).

I have looked at the Greek Enlightenment and have, through an examination of this historical period, attempted to move towards a hermeneutical foundation of liberalism. Narratives are part of the ongoing process of Understanding and are inherently finite in nature. Throughout this chapter, the often beleaguered sophists, the liberals of antiquity, have been examined from a different, non-Platonic perspective. Furthermore, Aristotle has often been used by communitarians to legitimize their positions. In turn, Aristotle has been used to legitimize the subjugation of whole groups of people. At the same time, one of the purposes of this chapter has been to demonstrate the necessity, in the examination of the paradox of Enlightenment, to stress and recognize the importance of lived and embodied experience. With both Plato and Aristotle, there is a strong attempt at closure. Interpretative horizons become ossified and they acquire a metaphysical status.

Throughout the Western tradition (and indeed in all traditions the world over), there has been a tendency towards a closure of interpretative horizons which amounts to antipluralism. In his thoughtful article, "The Plural Society and the Western Political Tradition," Kenneth McRae explores this history of antipluralism in the western tradition. McRae writes:

I suggest that in the political tradition of the West, and in its transmission through the centuries as an intellectual heritage, there has been a recurring element of insensitivity, not to mention

systematic bias, that has worked to the detriment of cultural pluralism and diversity in Western societies (McRae 1979: 676).

Throughout this chapter, I have followed and outlined the arguments of such thinkers as Havelock and Farrar who have attempted to do ancient liberalism justice by pointing out the biases of traditional scholarship. Traditionally, scholarship has favoured Plato and Aristotle and has tended to brush aside the liberals of antiquity. Instead of exploring the possibilities of pluralism, traditional scholarship has stressed the closure of interpretative horizons and is, at its core, inherently antiliberal in its motivations, assumptions and inspiration.

The hermeneutical exercise of looking at the Greek Enlightenment is important to our present day situation. My point in investing the energy and time in this examination is not to engage in a dry and esoteric archeology of the past. Rather, the purpose is to examine certain ideas of the past in terms of their relevance today. It is by deconstructing and reconstructing the past that we can properly situate ourselves in the present. We are historical beings, and the narrative of liberalism is one which emerges out of history. McRae stresses the importance of historical examination: "Much of the contemporary world lives under such conditions of societal pluralism, and the problem has assumed vastly increased dimensions in the post-colonial period" (McRae 1979: 678). In the second chapter, in my analysis of group rights, I will thoroughly examine the phenomenon of pluralism in the post-colonial landscape. McRae continues: "My question .. is to what extent the Western intellectual tradition, both in its doctrines and in the institutions to which they have given rise, can offer useful guideposts for political systems of this type" (McRae 1979: 678).

Throughout his article, McRae examines the existing tendency towards antipluralistic thinking running from Aristotle (with his polis-centred theories), and the medieval period, through Hobbes with his attempt to superimpose positivism on political philosophy (e.g. thinking of society as a mechanical entity). The various manifestations of nationalism which

tend to also advocate a closure of interpretative horizons. McRae writes: "Indeed the net result of such an effort might show the Western tradition to be even more hostile to societal pluralism than I have already indicated" (McRae 1979: 686). He is somewhat sceptical that theory can provide concrete and useful aids for the practice of pluralism. He does however, see some hope: "Although I have argued that the Western tradition has been largely unsympathetic to the claims of societal pluralism in the past, there is every likelihood that it possesses some untapped resources in this area and some capacity to adapt" (McRae 1979: 687).

McRae creates a list of different items which can help us to rethink liberalism in the Western tradition. One of the items is "closer scrutiny of those elements favourable to cultural pluralism in the Western political tradition ..." (McRae 1979: 687). I hold that one of these resources is the liberalism of antiquity. By engaging in a hermeneutical conversation with the liberalism of antiquity, we can make sense of pluralism in our own age. We can make liberalism a viable option through a historical examination of its roots.

Kenneth D. McRae stresses the need for a rich and vibrant conversation on pluralism.

He writes:

My own conviction is that the intergroup tensions characteristic of most plural societies will surface whether or not their component groups are explicitly recognized, and that the best chances for conflict management lie in acknowledging cultural pluralism and building upon it, openly, in a spirit of compromise, and before the time for rational discussion runs out (McRae 1979: 688).

We need not look far to see the urgency for a peaceful pluralism. The Canadian political landscape is pluralistic. The events of the summer of 1995 at Ipperwash and Gustafson Lake point to the urgency of a need for political solutions. It is through dialogue and hermeneutical conversation that solutions can be found in a non-violent way. My thesis attempts, at least in a small way, to contribute to this process.

Farrar characterizes Plato and Aristotle's political theory as "the retreat from politics" (Farrar 1988: 266). It is a flight from politics because it avoids the manifold possibilities to be found in political landscapes. Instead of dealing with the various political possibilities of the situation, one retreats to a certain type of "conceptual monism." Modern communitarians often use Aristotle as a fulcrum around which to construct a theoretical foundation for their position. They attack modern liberalism and modernity in general indirectly by using this strategy. I have attempted to put Aristotle in perspective. By using a hermeneutical analysis of the Greek Enlightenment, I attempt to resurrect the sophists as an alternative route in political philosophy. This alternative route is against the substantialism of the metaphysics of the dominant tradition in the Western political philosophical tradition. By attempting to re-examine the historical roots of communitarianism and liberalism we can more comfortably come to terms with the debate that besets our age.

ENDNOTES:

1. I classify his version of liberalism as communitarian. I will justify this in depth in chapter two.

CHAPTER TWO: RIGHTS, HISTORY AND NATIONHOOD: TOWARDS A TRANSHISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING OF LIBERALISM

In this second chapter, "Rights, History and Nationhood: Towards a Transhistorical Understanding of Liberalism," I want to extend the argument of the first chapter. In the first chapter, I argued that there is an inherent plurality in the human interpretation of reality. In this chapter, I will argue that a just society ought to provide a material blanket of support around minority cultures' interpretations of the Good. If material support is not provided, these interpretations of the Good could become relics of the past. Genuine and meaningful pluralism needs material support. The thorny problem of pluralism comes up most strongly in regards to the relation between nation states and national minorities. If there is to be a just and meaningful pluralism of cultural communities in a nation state, there has to be a link between material circumstances and interpretative frameworks. Differences between cultural/national peoples create the possibility of deep pluralism. With cultural homogeneity, pluralism is potentially less deep and less divisive. Rawls tacitly assumes the condition of cultural pluralism in *A Theory of Justice*. This pluralism is not deep but rather is only a superficial one. By insisting on the importance of cultural communities, I am importing a thick theory of the self and the Good into my ontology of liberalism.

At first glance, one perhaps may surmise that my project of developing a thicker theory of the Good might make my position more compatible with communitarianism than liberalism. By taking thick theories of the Good seriously, I undermine the traditional liberal thin theory of the Good and the self. I do, however, believe the stance that I am defending is liberal. Rawls assumes a thin and universalistic conception of the self. My thick theory of liberalism uses hermeneutics as a methodological aid and this will speak for

commensurability between different communities. Rosen writes of the connection between hermeneutics and politics: "Every hermeneutical program is at the same time itself a political manifesto or the corollary of a political manifesto" (Rosen 1987: 141).

Will Kymlicka in *Liberalism, Community and Culture* also argues for a thicker theory of the self and the Good. The thrust of Kymlicka's liberal position is to include history and national minority rights in the ontology of liberalism, but at the same time he avoids the trap of incommensurability by appealing to transhistorical, Kantian standards. His view is close to that of Habermas who also argues for normative constraints in narrative construction, not outside of history but from within history. Kymlicka rejects the communitarian (or Hegelian) interpretation that we find in Rorty's book *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*. With Kymlicka's transhistorical, normative standards, one can critically reflect on the practices of a society. I concentrate on two examples from aboriginal communities: 1) Pueblo theocracy (Kymlicka's example), and 2) the status of Cree women (my example). Through hermeneutical methodology, we can discern the possibility of a conversation between different narratives. In the end, the collection of narratives forms the *objective mind* (Dilthey's term). The intersection of different narratives implies the existence of a metanarrative and metaconversation. Despite this intersection, there could still be "regions" where the narratives do not overlap. Thus, I stress that this is not a *fusion of horizons* (Gadamer's term), but rather an interchange between narratives and is made possible by their commensurability.

The framework of my discussion will be the current position of aboriginal peoples living within the boundaries of the nation state of Canada. Some may complain that theory should not be concerned with practical situations. Perhaps, theory loses its "purity" if it is tainted with historical practices. Theory should, some may say, attempt to transcend the limitations of the present historical moment to discern ahistorical realities (the old Platonic

point of theory). A detached perspective allows for a critical analysis, but theory must engage the lived experience (or embodied experience) if it is to be meaningful. If the theorist does not incorporate lived experience (or embodied experience) into his political ontology, then there is a theory/ practice dichotomy in his or her thought. The theory would not adequately reflect and take into account the practice of the day. In contrast to an ideal theoretical perspective, I wish to actively engage with historical practices, and in the process, critically examine them. At the same time, there must be a move to think beyond them. When I use the term transhistorical, I mean a sort of transcendence- a sort of thinking outside an interpretive framework. Theory's purpose is to engage historical practices, but also to think beyond them.

Often political theorists write from the perspective of the mainstream culture with or without being explicitly conscious of it. Because of this perspective, they perhaps do not challenge the status quo as much as they otherwise would. Someone who comes from an Anglo¹ background (or a member of another dominant culture) *may not* have the same interest in critiquing the practice of his or her society. He or she may merely describe the practices of their society (as Rorty and the later Rawls do). There is less at stake for him or her in challenging the contemporary practices of the historical location. The perspective of the outsider allows one to critically reflect and conceptually move outside the practices of the day. The perspective of the outsider (or Other) allows one to critically tear apart practice. The Other in general has less reason to advocate a maintenance of the status quo. The Other has more to gain by questioning the status quo.

In the next chapter, I will thoroughly examine how Rawls' universalistic perspective fits into the dialectic of Enlightenment. For the time being, I will register a few points. During the modern Enlightenment, the traditional medieval narrative was dismantled. The successes of the physical sciences demonstrated the benefits of the new, emerging ideology of scientific

rationality. The task of philosophy became the pragmatic clarification of concepts within the framework of new scientific rationality. The metaphysical speculations of the medieval period were discarded. The new scientific rationality pictured reality from an objective, mountain-top perspective. The narrative of scientific rationality claimed to be the one true picture of reality. The instrumental mode of rationality still dominates our age. In turn, the methodology of the natural sciences has heavily influenced the methodology of the human sciences. I will say more about this in chapter three.

Rawls (of 1971) holds that his principles of justice are normative and universal. Rawls feels that he has discovered them through the process of the *reflective equilibrium* (Rawls 1971: 20, 48-51). His principle of *reflective equilibrium* functions in the same manner as the dialogue does in Plato's writings. In some way, I think that we could view Rawls (*qua* narrator) as a sort of Socratic interlocutor. For Rawls, the dialogue in *A Theory of Justice* is about the determination of the ideal principles of justice. Unlike the Socratic conversation, the conversation that Rawls puts forward in the original position does not have any thickness or content. Sandel (1982) protests the lack of content of the self in Rawls' original position, arguing that the self is inherently contextual. Despite Rawls' protests, the self of the original position is essentially Kantian (Sandel 1982). The self is stripped of all of its contingent traits. How does one have a conversation about the ideal conditions of justice when one does not have a context? Even Plato worked from a thick picture (Athenian democracy, or at least his interpretation of it) which he consequently detached himself from. The point of the matter is that Rawls does not really consider deep and meaningful pluralism as he tacitly assumes a congruence between cultural community and political community.

In a sense, Rawls' notion of political consensus serves as a backdrop for the conversation of the political community. The later Rawls brings out a communitarian, historical

spin on liberalism. Rawls claims that he wants a "political and not metaphysical" (Rawls 1985: 224) conception of liberalism. The post-1980 Rawls' stress on the "political" aligns him with pragmatism. The term "metaphysical," especially if we follow Rorty (1992), implies an ahistorical theoretical perspective. It seems that Rawls, while showing his Kantian colours in *A Theory of Justice*, later argues that liberalism is not necessarily a universal and ahistorical ideal of social space. Instead he confines it to a certain historical location. Despite this retreat into quasi-communitarianism tendencies, Rawls argues that pluralism is a normative condition of absolute value: "... the fact of pluralism- is not a mere historical location that will pass away soon; it is, I believe, a permanent feature of the public culture of modern democracies" (Rawls 1987: 4). With pluralism, where many conceptions of the Good exist, there is an inherent conflict of interpretations of the Good. Some conceptions of the Good may be incompatible with one another. Consensus helps to alleviate conflict: "... conflicts with political values are much reduced when the political conception is supported by an overlapping consensus, the more so the more inclusive the consensus" (Rawls 1987: 17). Rawls adds:

But the point of the idea of an overlapping consensus on a political conception is to show how, despite a diversity of doctrines, convergence on a political conception of justice may be achieved and social unity sustained in long-run equilibrium, that is, over time from one generation to the next (Rawls 1987: 5).

While I take issue with the way Rawls fleshes out the concept of consensus, I think that there is something worthwhile in it. As a general conception, it can be used to build a hermeneutical foundation for liberalism because consensus implies the notion of conversation. I will explore this in greater detail later.

While there is a way of interpreting the post-1980 Rawls as a historicist (e.g. as affirming that liberalism is historically located; see especially his 1980 "Kantian Constructionism" essay), there is much in his thought that still implies universalistic normativity, e.g., his claim that "an overlapping consensus is quite different from a *modus*

vivendi is clear from our model case" (Rawls 1987: 11). Rawls sees the concept of overlapping consensus as having normative weight in our historical period. It is not a mere description, according to Rawls, but a "moral conception" (Rawls 1987: 11). Rawls' point is that his notion of the principles of justice and also the idea of overlapping consensus have normative validity in our historical period. They do not necessarily apply in other contexts and historical periods.

In another article, "Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical," Rawls describes the consensus as the "shared intuitive ideas" of the citizens in a state (Rawls 1985). With a stress on atomic egalitarianism, there is no room in Rawls' ontology to accommodate the notion of group aspirations and group rights. In that sense, Rawls represents the latest manifestation of the classical liberal tradition which sees the individual as an end in itself. Rawls has a "conception of society as a system of co-operation between free and equal persons" (Rawls 1985: 249). Rawls fleshes out what he means by justice as fairness:

... this more fundamental idea is that of society as a system of fair social cooperation between free and equal persons. The concern of this section is how we might find a public basis of political agreement (Rawls 1985: 229).

Grounding his conception of society is the assumption of a congruence between the cultural and political communities. Such a congruence allows for the implementation of a political consensus with relative ease.

Van Dyke characterizes the congruence between the cultural and political communities in Rawls' work:

He does speak of different kinds of societies, but gives the impression that in crucial respects they are alike, statements about one being applicable to all. Through most of the book the apparent assumption is that societies are homogeneous (van Dyke 1975: 607).

Bloom adds to this:

Because Rawls does not take seriously the possible conflict of important values, because he really presupposes the existence of the consensus he believes he is setting out to establish, because he would prefer to simplify the human problem and narrow our alternatives rather than

face the fundamental conflicts requiring philosophic reflection, Rawls does not see that the contract theorists could not be satisfied with rejecting some views of the good as merely incompatible with the contract but had to find grounds for showing that they are untrue (Bloom 1975: 653).

On the score of cultural homogeneity, Bloom suggests that Rawls is not engaged in a critical examination, but rather in a mere justification of the status quo.

Van Heerden has a similar characterization of Rawls' liberal project: "... the liberal search for common ground rests on the assumption of cultural homogeneity which does not apply in a country such as South Africa" (van Heerden 1994: 99). Undoubtedly, what van Heerden has to say is equally applicable to the country of Canada as both the blacks of South Africa and Canadian Indians, in their own lands, have been colonized by Europeans. Van Heerden is not arguing for a doctrine of incommensurability, but rather points out that an incongruence between the cultural and political community is problematic. Throughout his article "Liberal Neutrality and Cultural Pluralism," van Heerden argues that all cultural communities must have some political power: "This requirement is particularly acute in the case of minority cultures such as, for example, the aboriginal Indians of North America and Canada" (van Heerden 1994: 99). The traditional liberal mantra of egalitarianism (such as that which we have in John Rawls' original position) ignores the embodied experience of the self. The point of the recognizing of cultural membership is to facilitate equality between individuals. The purpose is genuine equality and is not to give one group special treatment over another. Generally members of the majority have huge advantages over members of minority nationalities. Van Heerden writes: "Kymlicka contends that by treating cultural membership as a private matter liberalism jeopardizes the very ends it wishes to advance, namely individualism and egalitarianism" (van Heerden 1994: 99).

Kymlicka notes that sometimes "those who have the same citizenship may also have the same cultural membership" (Kymlicka 1992: 135). But, most of the countries of the world

have significant national minorities within their borders. Liberal theory must address this fact squarely. There is rarely, if ever, a close correspondence between the cultural and political community. Kymlicka writes: "But the two forms of community may not coincide: the political community may contain two or more groups of people who have different cultures, speaking different languages, developing different cultural traditions" (Kymlicka 1992: 135). In our own country, there are two significant groups of national minorities: 1) aboriginals and 2) French Canadians. Despite the presence of these significant minorities, Anglo Canadians have political hegemony. The English language is used in all locations outside of Quebec as the major language of business and government. Because of the manner in which democracy functions, the majority always wins, and the majority in Canada is Anglo. Kymlicka writes: "It's surprising ... that liberal theorists haven't explicitly defended, or even discussed, this implication of their theories" (Kymlicka 1992: 137). Kymlicka (1992) attacks the manner in which liberal democracy fails to provide the basis for rich and deep cultural pluralism in culturally diverse nations. To use Habermas' term, there is in reality in contemporary liberal democracies a *crisis of legitimacy*.

I would like to make one important qualification here. There is a very large difference between national minorities and immigrant minorities (for example those who come after the incorporation of the nation state). The nation state is important to political philosophy, and its historicity must be taken into account in theory. In the case of Canada, this would be after the establishment of the Anglo-dominated federation. National minorities such as Indian groups and French Canadians are in a strong position to question the nation state of Canada. There is a moral argument to be made in that these national minorities, within the present territory of Canada, were independent nations before the establishment of the nation state of Canada. Unless one subscribes to a sort of "will to power" philosophy of history, then the existence of

previous nationalities will continue to raise important questions.

I want to use a couple a of quotations to round out my point:

The continuing sense of Indian nationhood is further fostered by the fact they are significantly unlike other Canadian ethnic groups. They have an inalienable land base, aboriginal and treaty rights, and a special status in the Constitution and the Royal Proclamation. Also, unlike all others in the Americas, they are not immigrants. They are the original people; they have no other homeland (*Pathways of Self-Determination* 1984: xv).

Indian nations prëexisted in Canada before the arrival of various European immigrant groups.

Unlike other groups immigrating to Canada, Indian nations have no other, distant homelands.

If one argues that Indians are merely conquered nations, then one has left the realm of serious political and moral philosophy. The existence of the nation state of Canada would then be morally bankrupt. Most white immigrants came to this country by choice, and gave up their rights to recognition of their nationality here. They have legitimate claims for rights *qua* individuals but not *qua* members of nationalities. Furthermore, their patterns of immigration were sporadic and do not constitute the development (with the exception of the French and English) of legitimate nations of people who developed historically within the geopolitical space of Canada.

Sol Sanderson, a former chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and a citizen of my first nation (the James Smith Cree First Nation) writes:

People of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds can feel comfortable living in Canada in a melting-pot situation because they know that their mother country is always going to be fostering and preserving their culture, their language, and so on. It is not like that for us Indians. We have no place to retreat to. We have to stand firm where we are. So, in Saskatchewan, in exercising our trust obligations to future generations of Indians, our people and leaders are concentrating on safeguarding our cultural heritage (Sanderson 1984: 154)

One of the reasons I engaged with the thought of Dilthey (and the hermeneutical tradition) in the first chapter was to argue that political philosophy needs a sense of embodiment, thickness instead of the detached, thin view of the self which is usually bandied about by liberalism. Kymlicka is clearly aware of the dangers of universalistic liberalism which

ignores the concrete, historical, embedded experience of people. A thicker understanding of the self, as a function of history and experience, drops any mountain-top (thin universalistic) pretensions. Kymlicka is clearly aware of the dangers of universalistic liberalism found both in Rawls and also in the White Paper of Pierre Trudeau. Because Kymlicka and I rely on a thicker theory of the self, there is a shared element between our positions and those of communitarians, underscoring perhaps the great potential of a dialogue between the liberal and communitarian camps. Like Kymlicka, Gutman speaks of the "constructive potential of communitarianism" (Gutman 1985: 321). One of the "constructive potentials of communitarians" is to stress as Kymlicka and I do, the embodied nature of experience.

If we think of individuals as isolated from their contexts, then clearly we will have to assume the backdrop of the dominant culture (there usually is a dominant culture in every nation state) whose narrative dominates interpretations of the Good. Ironically, by ignoring the importance of cultural membership, liberals undermine the traditional liberal tenet of egalitarianism. The conceptions of the Good life will reflect the interests of the dominant culture and members of minority nationalities will be placed at an immediate disadvantage. Members of the majority culture would clearly have a huge and unfair advantage. One of the great failures of modern liberal democracy is that it fails to acknowledge the manner in which the majority can have political power over minorities. Majority does not equal morally just. Mill of course warned against the tyranny of the majority and it is partly for this reason that he proposed a system of rights. In the same way, collective rights protect members of national minorities from the tyranny of the majority.

I have just noted that Mill warned about the potential for a tyranny of the majority. Ironically, Mill endorses the tyranny of larger nationalities over smaller ones. Kymlicka writes that "Mill insisted that it was undeniably better for a Scottish Highlander to be part of Great

Britain, or for a Basque to be part of France, 'than to sulk on his rocks, the half-savage relic of past times, revolving in his own little mental orbit, without participation or interest in the general movement of the world' "(Mill 1972: 363-4. cf. Kymlicka 1995: 53). A Hegelian assumption about the primacy of world historic peoples is reflected in this statement. The larger nations, such as Great Britain, France and Germany, were allegedly worthy of remaining nation states, whereas Mill held that smaller nations, such as Croats, Scots, and Basques, should be subsumed within the larger nation states. We could extend this understanding to the *present* political landscape of Canada. Using Mill's model, English and French Canada would be considered the larger nations (or peoples), whereas, the Cree, for example, would be considered smaller nations.

Kymlicka adds: "The great nations were seen as civilized, and as the carriers of historical development" (Kymlicka 1995: 53). Lord Durham applied Mill's distinction between great and satellite nations to Canada:

His solution, endorsed by J. S. Mill and adopted by the British government, was the more or less forcible assimilation of the French, so as to create a homogenous English nation-state. He had no sympathy for the 'vain endeavour' of the French Canadians to maintain their 'backward' culture (Kymlicka 1995: 55. Kymlicka cites Craig 1963: 146-150).

The same assimilationistic policy was activated by the Canadian government against Indian peoples. In the third chapter, I wish to argue that far from being a 'backward culture,' Indian philosophy has much to add to contemporary discourse.

At the same time, at a certain level, *Realpolitik* will dictate that the majority language, which is English in most parts of Canada, might be the best for business or other pragmatic matters. The majority culture, English, already has *de facto* right in virtue of its majority and the manner in which democracy functions. If we use Rawls' original position as a heuristic device, we would certainly want to choose conditions that would ameliorate our situation if we had happened to be born into a national minority.

The Dworkin insurance scheme (Dworkin 1981: 297-299. cf. Kymlicka 1992: 192), like Rawls' original position, attempts to take into account the contingencies that could surround an individual's selfhood (e.g. his wealth, etc.). Dworkin uses the idea of purchasing insurance to construct a model to argue for egalitarianism. According to Dworkin's insurance scheme, we do not know what our lives will be like so we have to buy insurance in case things do not end up very well for us. Kymlicka imports possible cultural membership in a group into Dworkin's insurance scheme. Kymlicka wants to flesh out Dworkin's hypothetical self and give it content, taking cultural membership seriously. Kymlicka allows calculating for the possibility of belonging to an oppressed minority culture. He extends Dworkin's insurance scheme by presenting the hypothetical event of two ships with passengers of distinct language communities. A computer translation language allows people from different languages to talk to each other. Some people from the same culture will choose different life projects. Dworkin's insurance scheme "would have to be some form of collective insurance, since the insurance payments are useless to individuals by themselves" (Kymlicka 1992: 193) An individual needs a community to engage in cultural practices. Instead: "Aboriginal people would need to receive and employ the insurance benefits collectively" (Kymlicka 1992: 193). In contrast to the universal liberalism of Rawls, Trudeau (which I will discuss later), Dworkin and other traditional liberals, this insurance scheme takes cultural membership seriously.

Kymlicka's take on Dworkin's insurance scheme gives importance to groups and in turn to an embodied sense of experience. Van Dyke stresses the importance of embedded (or lived) human experience:

These groups commonly share a tradition and culture that set them apart, and the members tend to have a consciousness of kind. In practice many such groups demand what they regard as justice for themselves as collective entities; that is, they demand legal status and rights as collective entities (van Dyke 1975: 607).

Van Dyke is talking about national minorities within a nation state. To accord rights to a

collective entity instead of to individuals is perhaps a strange way of thinking about rights. Kymlicka (1992) prefers to think of according rights to individuals who are members of a group. Also, with Habermas' model, it is individuals *qua* members of groups who experience a *legitimacy crisis*. I shall return to this point later.

Bloom notes that there is "nothing in the original position that corresponds to any man's real experience" (Bloom 1975: 652). In order to have a genuine, liberal hermeneutical conversation, we have to have a full, thick conception of the self. For there to be an equality between individuals, the existence of national minorities has to be taken into account through collective rights. In this way, members of minority nationalities will not be coercively subjected to the will of the national majority. In my model of liberalism, I propose a notion of asymmetrical federalism for collectives of minority peoples (nations such as the Cree and the French). To respect the dignity and rights of Anglo citizens in Canada, the scope and degree to which these rights would exist would have to be limited. An example of this would be English rights in Quebec. Clearly the rights of the English minority have to be protected from the possible tyranny of the majority.

Kymlicka notes that having a system of aboriginal rights might serve as "an attempt to distribute fairly the costs arising from our recognition of the values of cultural membership" (Kymlicka 1992: 200). Because of this, aboriginal people would be accorded rights in order to protect their interpretative frameworks. One way in which it might be proposed that this could be made concrete would be by restricting the mobility rights of non-aboriginal people. Because of possible threats to aboriginal cultures, "aboriginal leaders advocated restrictions on the mobility, property, and voting rights of non-aboriginal people" (i.e. within aboriginal territories) (Kymlicka 1992: 183). I support Kymlicka's point, but I think that we have to be careful how we interpret this idea. I think that it would be exceedingly difficult to restrict the

movement of people into the North. I think what would be more realistic would be to establish a system of rights which would help keep aboriginal communities from being overwhelmed by newcomers. One such mechanism would be the establishment of co-management boards which would insure aboriginal involvement in political matters. The curtailing of exploitation of the North by multinational corporations, such as Cameco, is an important part of this process. Also, minority language rights would allow aboriginal people to create their own education boards.

Large nation states have the same demands as minority nations. Canada restricts the influx of people into its borders. One of the motivating factors is that Canada wishes to maintain English and French as dominant languages. Another factor is the limited resources of the land. The same applies to Indian nations such as the Cree nation. In fact, one could argue quite cogently that the "immigration" of European Canadians into Indian lands has been rather generous. Indians have strong moral claims for maintaining that at least *some* of their previous land possessions be areas of limited immigration by non-Indians. During the 1990 Meech Lake debate, Elijah Harper, an eloquent Cree politician, argued that Indian peoples had signed Treaties in a spirit of generosity. Indian people have always wanted to share the vast resources of this great land. It seems morally sound for Indians to argue that immigration should be limited in certain areas of Indian residence (e.g. the North, reserves). Such collective rights safeguard the cultural matrix, the framework of understanding of aboriginal cultures: "... special rights are needed to treat aboriginal people with the respect they are owed as members of a cultural community" (Kymlicka 1992: 183-4). Rights also provide the basis for a redistribution of wealth.

In the first chapter, I attempted to argue for the inherently finite nature of human consciousness and human understanding. I tried to argue that human beings interpret reality

from a multitude of perspectives; the fact that there is a pluralism of interpretations of the world which is an *a priori* condition of human consciousness. In the Greek Enlightenment, the emerging notions of objectivity and pluralism (in the dialectic of Enlightenment) did not so much involve a change of material conditions but rather a change in ideas. The change that occurred with the emergence of the new narrative of the modern Enlightenment was radically different from the Greek Enlightenment. The new emerging narrative provided humanity with a basis for materially manipulating reality, through instrumental rationality which I will discuss in greater detail in the next chapter, in a way which did not occur in the Greek Enlightenment. It was not until the modern Enlightenment that there was a change in material conditions. The modern Enlightenment framed our understanding of reality in decisively material terms. Furthermore, the natural sciences grounded and shaped all interpretations of the Good and constrained narratives, contra postmodernists such as Rorty and some in the hermeneutical camp such as Gadamer who believe that narrative construction is not constrained. Unlike others in the hermeneutical tradition, I extend the notion of adequacy of interpretation to reality itself (not just to a written text). In the next chapter, I will demonstrate how the aboriginal conception of the Good can add to the rationality of modern science.

But for the time being I merely want to stress that it is not enough for a political theorist to say that, "Yes, aboriginal people, you have your conception of the Good." If there is no corresponding blanket of material support for an interpretation of the Good, then it is a mere idealist platitude. In the last chapter I made the claim that the Greek Enlightenment was more a revolution of ideas than anything else. The modern Enlightenment created a new narrative which valued naturalistic explanation. Modern science, because of its great successes, made it imperative for each narrative to come to terms with the objective, material conditions required to sustain that narrative. For national minorities, rights address the

materiality of conceptions of the Good. I will argue that rights, when thought through, will be sufficient to safeguard a culturally distinctive interpretative framework. A just nation state would allocate goods to component minority nationalities so that, by means of those goods, their distinctive interpretative horizons could be preserved.

Walzer argues against a pluralism of interpretive communities: minority cultures should be absorbed into the mainstream cultural/ interpretive community. In Walzer's conception of a nation state, there is an assumption (or at the very least an expectation of) a congruence between cultural and political community. In many ways, Walzer's communitarian position elucidates some of the dangers of a strong communitarian position which stresses ethnicity. The twentieth century, perhaps because of the advent of modern technologies, has seen heinous things done in the name of "collective rights" and "collective self-determination." The kind of asymmetrical federalism that I am advocating will allow different nationalities to live together peacefully in a nation state. Walzer's hard-core communitarian position supports nationalism: "New states and governments must make peace with the old inhabitants of the land they rule. And countries are likely to be shaped as closed territories, dominated, perhaps by particular nations" (Walzer 1983: 79). Citizenship would be extended only to members of minority cultures through a process of "naturalization" (Walzer 1983: 80). Kymlicka rightly calls this grandiose notion of citizenship "fictitious" (Kymlicka 1992: 227). This notion of citizenship also corresponds very closely to Trudeau's notion of citizenship, in the White Paper of 1969, which I will discuss later.

Kymlicka, like Walzer, does acknowledge the importance of cultural membership: "Walzer's emphasis on the social understandings of historical communities may seem like a useful corrective to recent liberal inattention to questions of cultural membership" (Kymlicka 1992: 234). There is, however, a dark side of the stress on "embodied" experience, as well,

which can be "politically disastrous" (Kymlicka 1992: 234). Machiavelli, like Walzer, wanted to create a congruence between the cultural and political community through force. Both Machiavelli and Walzer justify this on "realpolitik grounds" (Kymlicka 1992: 224). Kymlicka characterizes Walzer's dominant culture (nationality) of a state as "cultural creators" (Kymlicka 1992: 224) who impose their will upon national minorities within the nation state. The process involved by the dominant culture is a product of the negative pole of Enlightenment. In another article, Walzer mediates his position between "high-minded moral absolutism" and "a sort of low-minded ... neo-Nietzschean subjectivism" (Walzer 1992: 99).

Undoubtedly, his position has both elements. There is a "high-minded moral absolutism" because of the closure of the interpretive horizon supported by the boundaries of the nation state. Walzer refers to cultural communities as "historically stable" (Walzer 1983: 83) and he also uses the term "national family" (Walzer 1983: 78). There is not the possibility of the liberal condition of openness: "The distinctiveness of cultures and groups depends upon closure and, without it, cannot be conceived as a stable feature of human life" (Walzer 1983: 71). There is also the "neo-Nietzschean subjectivism" evident in the nation state (with its dominant ethnic majority) being seen as a "cultural creator." The two poles of Enlightenment are thus linked in this position. There is a certain closure of interpretative horizons. While this closed interpretative horizon is an intersubjective creation, it is taken to be "objective" and "authoritative." In *After Virtue*, MacIntyre argues that we have a choice between Nietzsche with a will to power, or Aristotle's closed community standards. Ironically, the two elements are linked and interrelated in MacIntyre's and Walzer's position.

The Nietzschean element, the negative pole of Enlightenment, can be disastrous for national minorities. Because of *Realpolitik*, some members of the national majority such as the Reform party and the Liberal party of British Columbia, consider national minorities to be

conquered peoples. Some in the national majority hold that members of minority nations should assimilate into the "creative will" of the national culture of the majority. However, current practices are not moral in themselves simply because of their existence. Anyone who merely describes practices, such as Rorty and MacIntyre, dodges the task of critical analysis. Practices have to be justified with argument and can always be revised and improved in light of new and emerging circumstances. There is very little difference between Walzer's "will to power" position and the individualism of Rawls' liberal ontology. While Walzer deliberately wants to absorb minority cultures into the national culture, Rawls' position does this in a more implicit manner. Rawls as a liberal advocates pluralism quite strongly, but this pluralism assumes a congruence between the political and cultural community (Kymlicka 1992: 137-138). The logic of Rawls' position is implicitly assimilationist with his classical liberal ontology of individualism. Both Rawls' and Walzer's positions will lead to the absorption of minority cultures via different routes.

I shall later argue that Trudeau's liberalism, and the current political landscape of Canada, are also manifestations of the same phenomenon. On the surface, the liberalism of both Trudeau and Rawls liberalism (which both received their articulation in the early 1970s) have laudable goals, stressing the equality of all citizens. But on a deeper level, the ontology of individualism of classical liberalism divides the minority into discrete small units (which itself is characteristic of instrumental rationality which I shall discuss later) which will be forced into the majority culture through a "democratic process." There is no basis for justifying this morally or politically. With such a position, we have moved outside of political philosophy, and have begun only to describe history and politics without critically analyzing them.

The political landscape in Canada may be reduced, from the perspective of Anglo Canada, to a process of demarcation between conquered people and the conquerors. This

seems to me to be a spurious inspiration for moral philosophy. It reminds one of Thrasymachus' position in the *Republic* and the Melian dialogue in *The Peloponnesian War* with the domination of the strong by the weak having become the criterion for determining the relationship between groups. In practice this is often how different groups have interacted. Noel Dyck summarizes the power imbalance between whites and Indians:

... the tutelage that Canadian Indians have experienced has been based neither upon a contractual agreement nor a negotiated understanding but upon the power of one side to regulate the behaviour of the other in accordance with a set of unilaterally selected purposes (Dyck 1991: 24).

It becomes a master-servant relationship between the "conqueror" and "conquered," creating a strong hierarchy. Dyck writes: "In order for tutelage to achieve these ideological, political, and national purposes it must destroy aboriginality and create dependence" (Dyck 1991: 30). The domination and degradation of Indians by the government is and has been cultural genocide, distinguished from biological genocide which I shall deal with later, and the destruction of a Habermasian "life-world" (a manner of interpreting reality and the Good).

In multinational states such as Canada, it is the group in power, to a large measure but not exclusively, who defines the "stable standards" of the political community; all of this is done in the name of democracy. Without recognizing the importance of minority nationalities, democracy and liberalism become nothing more than masks hiding the reality of assimilation of minority cultures. The dominant group dominates the weaker group; the Anglos rule the French and aboriginals; and the French struggle to assert themselves over aboriginals. By accepting liberalism on a shallow, face value basis, as an equality between individuals, the opportunity of genuine pluralism and equality evaporates. With an ontology of radical egalitarianism, liberalism fails in its quintessential task of critical analysis and becomes a sort of historical apologetic. It is not enough for the political theorist to merely describe the domination of one particular group, but rather he or she must attempt to ground his or her

position with critical arguments. Despite Anglo Canadians, especially the Reform Party, protesting the "special" treatment of aboriginals, they fail to realize that their ethnic group dominates the "democratic" process with an almost complete hegemony of political power. In virtue of this fact, we might think of the members of the majority culture as having *de facto* group rights (that is group rights in practice). Their language, English, is the dominant language. Also, they are hired more often, in terms of proportion, than members of other groups. People of their background control much of the capital in this country.

By thinking of rights in this sense, with the acknowledgment of *de facto* rights of the majority, group rights talk is placed on its head. No longer is the burden of proof for having group rights on the shoulders of national minorities. It acknowledges the unfair distribution of wealth (the link between materiality and interpretation of the Good) and power and urges that the majority justify its privileged position. By linking practice and theory, one can deconstruct liberal democracy talk and demonstrate that it can be, in some cases, nothing more than a certain Nietzschean will to power. Important questions are raised about legitimacy in the nation state as recent events in Québec demonstrate.

Both Walzer and Rawls share the assumption of cultural homogeneity. Walzer writes that "the theory of justice must allow for the territorial state, specifying the rights of its inhabitants and recognizing the collective rights of admission and refusal" (Walzer 1981: 81). We have the xenophobic thinking of the Reform party, with their "code talk" about immigrants and national minorities, and the Parti Québécois with Jacques Parizeau's disparaging remarks about the "ethnic" vote after the results of the 1995 Referendum were known, and also with some aboriginal leaders with their "pedigree" laws for citizenship determination. A "politics of Otherness" makes the possibility of an exchange between interpretive frameworks exceptionally difficult. Walzer fleshes out this idea in terms of "territory" and "locations" (Walzer

1983: 79). I would, however, agree with Walzer that there is a link between land and people.² Walzer adds that "the link between the people and the land is a crucial feature of national identity" (Walzer 1983: 81). Location helps to define a people not only in a geopolitical sense, but also in a cultural sense.

Walzer argues for something of a Rawlsian political consensus in terms of ethnic-national heritage. He articulates perhaps more honestly than Rawls that there is a correspondence between the political and cultural community. Walzer's position is extreme and leaves its adherents little room to manoeuvre. There is no possibility for members of the minorities to have any rights in the nation state *qua members of national minorities*. Walzer's spheres of justice could be envisioned as circles which do not touch or intersect; there is no connection between them. There is no possibility for a hermeneutical conversation between the various parties. While Rawls' notion of self is excessively thin, Walzer's is excessively thick. If aboriginal people wanted a "collective right" in Walzer's sense, there would be no room for them to retain their cultural membership in a state dominated by Anglo culture. They would have to form their own nations. Walzer's position does not seem to provide the sort of stability that we need in today's world. Walzer's (and less directly Rawls') solution to the thorny problem of cultural pluralism is assimilation or separation. Instead we have to strive to find a common core of rationality; there has to be commensurability between different historical communities. Clearly nation states have to accommodate national minorities if there is to be peace and, perhaps more importantly, justice.

Van Dyke demonstrates the perilous position that many minorities are in, particularly indigenous cultures:

Groups around the world described as indigenous are generally weak, and it is everywhere agreed that special measures in their behalf are commonly justifiable if not imperative. As in the case of American Indians, reservations are often established for them (van Dyke 1975: 612).

Rawls' position is highly resistant to the notion of group rights. Walzer's position is also resistant to the perseverance of national minorities in a nation state; the only solution to these problems is for these national minorities to separate, which is particularly severe. In Canada, national minorities such as the Québécois and aboriginal peoples have resisted attempts to assimilate them into the mainstream Anglo culture. Under the rubric of "universal citizenship," there has been the illusion of equality.

In the early 1960s, there was a movement in the United States' for civil rights by Black Americans. An influential case, *Brown v. Board of Education*, sought to realize the liberal ideal of equality in relation to the educational facilities of American citizens. Kymlicka writes that "in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case ... the Fourteenth Amendment of the American Constitution, guaranteeing equal protection of the law to all its citizens, was used to strike down legislation that segregated blacks in the American South" (Kymlicka 1992: 141). Blacks had been excluded from society, refused entrance into various schools, and also refused the opportunity to live in certain areas of cities. They did not want to be excluded from American life any longer and argued for a colour-blind society. Groups rights were not important to them because they were not national minorities with an inalienable land base. They were American citizens, albeit with an ethnicity. It must be noted that the triumph of black Americans is truly one of the great feats of twentieth century liberalism.

In the late 1960's, shortly after being elected, Trudeau argued for an abstract, ideal notion of the universal self. In response, at least in part, to the United States' "just society" program of the Johnson administration, and the explosion of civil rights in the United States, Trudeau attempted to push for the same kind of colour-blind society in Canada. People would not be judged according to their racial, ethnic, or religious backgrounds, but rather would be treated equally under the rubric of universal citizen. The notion of universal citizen has to be

qualified. While Trudeau pushed hard for the establishment of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada, he did not recognize any collective rights for French Canadians; he implemented the policies as a response to demographic factors. Within this traditional liberal ontology of radical individualism and universalism, there is no room to accommodate cultural membership. The self is seen in sterile abstract terms, divorced from the lived and embodied experiences of human beings. Kymlicka summarizes a Rawlsian-Trudeauian answer to this question posed by the possibility of a theory/ practice dichotomy: "But that complaint [that real equality will not be achieved], while valid, is more about our failure to live up to the goal of a colour-blind society than about any flaw in that goal" (Kymlicka 1992: 182).

Trudeau wanted to mirror the blossoming of civic participation in the United States. Kymlicka argues that the reasoning of *Brown* "underlay the Canadian government's 1969 proposal to remove the special constitutional status of Indians" (Kymlicka 1995: 59). Trudeau promised "to make Government more accessible to people, to give our citizens a sense of full participation in the affairs of Government..." (Trudeau 1968. cf. Weaver 1981: 8). Weaver writes: "'Participatory democracy' became the catch phrase, although the meaning of participation was never publicly explained by Trudeau" (Doerr 1973: 98. cf. Weaver 1981: 8). Trudeau made a pretense of consulting aboriginal people about their future. Weaver writes: "An early connection between civic participation and Indian policy was established in 1967 when the government decided to hold systematic consultation meetings with Indians to discuss revisions to the Indian Act" (Weaver 1981: 10). In the end, aboriginal people were not treated with respect nor taken seriously. The consultation process was nothing more than a superficial gesture. Weaver writes: "Participation was said to have taken place, but in fact, it did not occur; Indians were not party to the deliberations that produced the White paper" (Weaver 1981: 10). The famous White Paper was the product of this "consultation" and

marked the betrayal of aboriginal people. Noel Dyck writes that the "the contents of the White paper revealed that the government had chosen its policy proposals without much regard for Indians' suggestions ..." (Dyck 1991: 108).

Trudeau was quoted as saying: "I am against any policy based on race or nationalism" (Interview with Harry Hawthorn, February 1976, Vancouver. cited in Weaver 1981: 54). Weaver adds that "Trudeau did not believe that the future should be fettered to the chains of the past" (Weaver 1981: 54). This goes against the more historical, embodied notion of experience of liberalism found in Kymlicka and Habermas. Trudeau wrote to Dave Chouchene, then an aboriginal leader, that cultural diversity should sustain itself on its own and "not artificially, through social legislation or by seeking the protection of history" (Trudeau 1969. cf. Weaver 1981: 180). Trudeau's position was that cultures should flourish on their own strength and not be "propped up" by governmental intervention. Weaver comments on Trudeau's stance of the period: "In his ideas about society and culture, Trudeau took a strong social Darwinian approach in emphasizing freedom and competition" Weaver 1981: 54). Strong cultures thrive, whereas weak ones die. There is a "market place" of cultures, as it were. Many (among them Rawls) critique the unfairness of the "market place" of wealth, but without qualification or analysis. They also accept the concept of the "market place of cultures." Undoubtedly, there are historical reasons for this as liberalism was historically linked, at least in part, to the emergence of a free market economy. Liberal theorists put constraints on the flow and distribution of capital in the same way that they must rethink the flow of "cultural capital."

Weaver characterizes Trudeau's policies in the following manner: "Policies should begin with an appreciation of the current political realities, not outmoded historical constraints" (Weaver 1981: 54). The statement mirrors Rawls' "time-slice theory" (Nozick's term) of the original position, where the manner in which goods ~~were initially~~ acquired is not considered.

Trudeau emphasizes the ahistorical nature of his position with his denial of aboriginal rights: "...no society can be built on historical 'might-have-beens' "(Trudeau 1968: 9. cited in Weaver 1981: 55). Trudeau's stress on *Realpolitik* is not unlike that of Machiavelli and Thrasymachus. Instead of confronting the historical realities of the political landscape of Canada, Trudeau hides behind universalistic liberal talk, attempting to divert the concerns of national minorities.

Trudeau, with his Rawlsian vision, views a society as an aggregate of individuals and not various groups. Weaver writes: "Collective rights, such as those of minority groups, are of secondary interest, for the state is viewed as an aggregate of individuals, not groups, whose fundamental freedoms are to be respected" (Weaver 1981: 55). With this "universalistic" view of the individual, the self is viewed as an entity which cannot make rights claims on the basis of history: "With the focus on the individual, equality, and freedom, liberalism as a system of ideas ignores the social collectivity by framing political rights in terms of the individual" (Weaver 1981: 55). Thus, the group does not have rights *qua* a collective entity.

The White Paper of 1969 "proposed a global termination of all special treatment of Indians, including the Indian Act" (Weaver 1981: 4). Sanders writes of the Liberal position of the time: "Special status was identified as a trap. The proper goal was equality of rights" (Sanders 1983: 319). I have already discussed how this surface level ontology of liberalism really at a deeper or second level signifies the forced and gradual incorporation of the national minority into the mainstream culture. Sanders adds: "Indian treaties would end. Aboriginal rights claims and the promised Indian claims commission were rejected" (Sanders 1983: 319). The goal of the White Paper called for nothing short of the gradual assimilation of aboriginal people and the destruction of aboriginality.

Ironically, instead of solving the "Indian problem" once and for all, it merely provided a point around which Indians rallied. Noel Dyck writes: "In October 1969 the Minister of Indian

Affairs felt compelled by public criticism to stoutly deny that the White Paper was either a program for 'cultural genocide' or a device for stripping Indians of their lands" (Dyck 1991: 109). Weaver adds: "The White Paper became the single most powerful catalyst of the Indian nationalistic movement, launching it into a determined force for nativism- reaffirming a unique cultural heritage and identity" (Weaver 1981: 171). Eventually, Trudeau did withdraw the White Paper because of strong pressure from Indian groups. Sanders characterizes this as an "effective Indian veto" (Sanders 1983: 335).

I took the time to examine Trudeau's position on aboriginal rights because it provides a basis for theory on which to reflect. If, as Canadian citizens, we are to make sense of liberalism, we certainly have to put them in the context of praxis, namely, the Canadian political landscape. Theory, if it is not to become meaningless and esoteric, must take practice into account. Trudeau's point was to argue for a universalistic sense of citizenship which did not take culture (including the case of national minorities) very seriously. I want to reiterate the counter position:

Cultural membership is more fundamental than most associations into which persons freely enter. I follow Kymlicka ... in regarding culture as the context within which individuals may exercise choice, but which is itself not open to choice (van Heerden 1994: 97).

Habermas, like Kymlicka and van Heerden, endorses the view that individuals are embedded within interpretative horizons. Habermas uses the term "systems" (Habermas 1975: 118) and he also uses the term "life-world" (Habermas 1975: 4). He believes in a pluralism of interpretations of the Good (reality), but sees the possibility of a conversation between individuals in different interpretive frameworks. I would argue, contra Kymlicka (1992) and van Heerden, that an individual is not *intrinsically* tied to a culture. Kymlicka (1995), however, argues that it is possible for the self to shift cultural allegiances without the use of coercion by the majority culture: "It would be implausible to say that people are never able to switch

cultures" (Kymlicka 1995: 84). Like Habermas and Kymlicka (1995), I believe in the possibility of transhistorical dialogue about rationality between people in different life-worlds. I would agree with Kymlicka (1992) and van Heerden to the extent that we cannot choose in advance into which culture we will be born. As Rawls famously put things, our birth circumstance is arbitrary from a moral point of view.

The concept of life-world grounds Habermas' political philosophy, which he characterizes as "the avoidance of chaos, that is, the overpowering of contingency" (Habermas 1975: 4). He speaks of "community" and "shared meaning" "that is constitutive for the socio-cultural life world" (Habermas 1975: 10). At first glance, this may sound as if Habermas is arguing for a closure of interpretive horizons. On the contrary, Habermas' notion of thickness only situates an individual within an interpretive horizon: "The unity of the person requires the unity-enhancing perspective of a life-world that guarantees order and has both cognitive and moral-practical significance" (Habermas 1975: 118). Like Aristotle, Habermas stresses embodied experience and the practical nature of moral life.

Kymlicka's term "societal culture" bears a great deal of resemblance to Habermas' term life-world. Kymlicka defines a "societal culture" as "a culture which provides its members with meaningful ways of life across the full range of human activities, including social, educational, religious, recreational, and economic life, encompassing both the public and private spheres" (Kymlicka 1995: 76). A social culture is "embodied in practices covering most areas of human activity" (Kymlicka 1995: 76). Our membership in a societal culture thickens our experience and "provides us with an intelligible context of choice, and a secure sense of identity and belonging, that we call upon in confronting questions about personal values and projects" (Kymlicka 1995: 105).

Unlike Aristotle, Habermas and Kymlicka avoid commensurability problems. People

from different interpretative horizons can communicate with each other. Habermas refers to this as discursive ethics. This is not the closure of interpretive horizons, but rather openness within interpretative horizons with the possibility of a hermeneutical exchange through conversation. Life-worlds can always change. Kymlicka writes: "New experiences or circumstances may reveal that our earlier beliefs about the good are mistaken. No end is immune from such potential revision" (Kymlicka 1995: 91). Habermas relates the life-world of modernity to contemporary political practice. Likewise, Kymlicka notes that modernity affords indigenous peoples new possibilities:

While indigenous peoples do not want modernization forced upon them, they demand the right to decide for themselves what aspects of the outside world they will incorporate into their cultures, and many indigenous peoples have moved toward a more urbanized and agricultural lifestyle (Kymlicka 1995: 104).

Non-western people may wish to incorporate aspects of modernity into their discourse and practice, but this must not be done in a way that merely reintroduces the colonialism of the Church or that of large resource companies such as Cameco. Inherent in both the positions of Kymlicka and Habermas is the assumption that the administration of a society must correspond to the wishes of those being governed. Throughout *Legitimation Crisis*, Habermas argues that a crisis emerges when the administration of a society does not correspond to the will of the people.

Habermas' thesis is that there is always a conflict, a tension, between the apparatus of the state and the will of the people (a sort of conceptual hole). Habermas frames this in terms of class structure:

Economic crisis is immediately transformed into social crisis; for in unmasking the opposition of social classes, it provides a practical critique of the ideology of the market's pretension to be free of power (Habermas 1975: 29).

Habermas is seeking to demonstrate the existing dichotomy between appearance and reality. There is the appearance in western societies of a society being ruled democratically, but the

interests of the workers (who are underemployed or unemployed) demonstrate the limits of this society. The tension between appearance and reality points to the antinomies of the rationality of the life-world. I apply this analysis to the relation of the ruling majority to national minorities. The crisis occurs because there are contradictions of interest in the system.

In the first chapter, I examined the Greek Enlightenment and illustrated how conceptual holes emerged in dominant narratives. A crisis in terms of reason emerged because of the dismantling of traditional life-world structures (with the tension between objectivity and pluralism). There was a crisis in the patterning of rationality itself. For Habermas, a " 'rationality deficit' and a 'legitimation deficit' result from the difference in the structures of the economic system and the administration" (Habermas 1975: 47). With this crisis, (which is the emergence of conceptual holes internal to the life-world), "cultural traditions are undermined and weakened" (Habermas 1975: 47). Habermas writes: "Crisis states assume the form of disintegration of social institutions" (Habermas 1975: 3). A crisis of legitimacy forces us to rethink the political institutions which govern our lives.

Central to Habermas' position is that democracy does not really exist in the western world except in the form of an illusion. The "steering capacity" of the community does not rest with the people but rather with technology. Habermas throughout *Legitimacy Crisis* uses the term "steering power" to refer to political power, relating this notion to the apparatus of the state (Habermas 1975: 138). There is an emphasis in modern political administrations on achieving certain goals and these goals are in turn influenced by technology. Habermas sketches out this conflict:

... on the one hand, the priorities set under economic imperatives cannot be allowed to depend on a general discursive formation of public will- therefore politics today assumes the appearance of technocracy. On the other hand, the exclusion of consequential practical questions from discussion by the depoliticized public becomes increasingly difficult, as a result of long-term erosion of the cultural tradition which formerly had regulated conduct, and which, till now, could be presupposed as a tacit boundary condition of the political system

(Habermas 1975: 5).

By replacing the older narrative, the technocratic framework becomes the dominant narrative.

Habermas adds: "Because of this, a chronic need for legitimation is developing today"

(Habermas 1975: 5). The need for legitimation develops not only along class lines, but also along national minority lines. In Canada, this is between Anglos, Québécois, and aboriginals.

While Habermas stresses the embodied notion of our experience, he also stresses the fact that it is individuals who experience crisis. While there are large scale narratives and interpretive horizons, it is individuals who are engaged with and experience crisis: "Systems are not presented as subjects, but according to pre-technical usage, *only* subjects can be involved in crisis" (Habermas 1975: 3). Individuals are the loci of consciousness. While communities exist around them, the individual is the entity through which society becomes conscious of itself. The resolution of a crisis is to give freedom to those caught up in it (particularly those who do not benefit from it). Habermas writes: "To conceive of a process as a crisis is tacitly to give it a normative meaning- the resolution of the crisis of legitimacy effects a liberation of the subjects caught up in it" (Habermas 1975: 1). The resolution of the crisis of legitimacy will undoubtedly help liberate aboriginal people through some form of self-government with a form of participatory democracy.

Habermas does not hold that every crisis will bring forth some notion of freedom. Rather, he focuses his attention on the stark contrast which arises between the ruling class and the under class. Habermas applies this to classes, whereas I extend it to the relationship between the majority nation with the minority nations. For the interests of the minority nationalities, the resolution of the legitimacy crisis can lead to nothing but an amelioration of their political situation.

The way that this crisis of legitimation would be realized would be the installation of

participatory democracy which would involve aboriginal people in a meaningful manner

(unlike Trudeau feigning in 1969 a "consultation" with aboriginal people). Habermas writes:

Genuine participation of citizens in the processes of political will-formation, that is, substantive democracy, would bring to consciousness the contradiction between administratively socialized democracy production and the continual private appropriation and use of surplus value (Habermas 1975: 36).

Aboriginal people would represent themselves and would not be paternalistically governed by a centralized government. This would be a shift in the power structure of a society.

Participation by citizens would question the distribution of wealth and power.

I want to postulate what aboriginal self-government would mean, but before I do that I want to move towards the question of rights and nationhood. I have tried to do three main things so far: 1) demonstrate the embodied nature of political experience, 2) demonstrate the significance of life-world and cultural narrative, and 3) raise questions about the traditional universalistic liberal ontology of individualism.

The notion of nation state has been considered sacrosanct in the post-World War Two geopolitical landscape. Political situations within the borders of nation states are often considered "internal matters." Also, another consequence of the notion of nation state is the dismissal of claims of national minorities. Questions of legitimacy involving national minorities have to be addressed in a more imaginative and creative manner than they have been in the past.

Patrick Thornberry, in his useful and informative article, "Is there a Phoenix in the Ashes?- International Law and Minority Rights," provides a useful historical analysis of the notion of national minorities in the post WWII era. Thornberry writes that "the negative consequences of the minorities experiment has largely conditioned the postwar response" (Thornberry 1980: 438). Partially as a response to the opportunistic manner in which Germany used the claims of German nationals living in neighbouring states, the United Nations framed

rights in individualistic terms. Individuals are seen as individuals without cultural/ national allegiance. The United Nations attempted to avoid reference to the thickness of the self's experience and "deleted all references to the rights of ethnic and national minorities" (Kymlicka 1995: 3). The boundaries of nation states have been considered inviolable.

Thornberry notes that the term "national minorities" (Thornberry 1980: 448) has not been used in recent history. With the political ontology of cultural homogeneity (or at least this is the expectation) stress is placed on individual rights. Thornberry writes:

The universalist and reductionist language of the modern human rights movement has tended to obscure the fact that denial of rights is still intimately connected with membership in groups existing outside the ideological framework of states (Thornberry 1980: 421-422).

Like Kymlicka and myself, Thornberry is arguing against the universalist notion of citizenship which clearly works more to the advantage of the majority.

There was a different approach taken in the period before WWII under the auspices of the League of Nations. Thornberry writes:

Under the League of Nations, human rights and minority rights, though limited in their application, formed a coherent package. Human beings were dealt with both atomically and as members of particular communities held together by a common consciousness or cultural, religious or linguistic tradition (Thornberry 1980: 454).

Neither of these elements can be absolute, but rather they are coterminous:

As a practical matter it is important to stress the essential, mutually complementing functions of minority rights and human rights; the former are an indispensable part of the broad postwar humanitarian movement. In case of a clash between them, neither class of right is absolute, though the presumption against infringement of fundamental individual rights is a very strong one (Thornberry 1980: 458).

In the era of the League of Nations, there was an attempt to balance individual rights with group rights. I shall examine an example involving Poland below. The context of choice for individuals was taken seriously. Instead of seeing the self as not having any essential qualities, the self should be viewed as being embodied and lived. Also, an important and essential link between theory and practice is established by this recognition. Thornberry

writes: "Human rights reflect the antinomy of state versus individual whereas minority rights are often characterized as group rights, and are sometimes equated by critics with privileges" (Thomberry 1980: 440). The point of group rights (or asymmetrical federalism) is to level the playing field. If importance is given to individual rights, then the collective right (or nationhood) of the group would be tempered. Women would be protected to a greater extent from sexist policies. I think that rests in a sort of "parallelism" with an appeal to transhistorical standards. By this, I mean that there are transhistorical standards which apply to *all* interpretative communities. I shall examine the issue of sexism later.

Group and collective claims cannot exist in isolation from other concerns. Rights must always be considered in light of the historical context in which they occur. Rights are always a function of other people's interests which must always be taken into account. Indian rights cannot exist in isolation from other people's human needs. Rights can be seen as a way of creating a hierarchy between different groups of people with those of the collective right holding an unfair advantage. A radical rethinking of the nature of rights allows for a more discerning perspective. If we think those in the majority culture have unfair advantages then we no longer see the collective right of the minority as an unfair advantage, but rather as a way of levelling the "playing field." Collective rights also reduce the potential of "the tyranny of the majority" and make genuine pluralism possible and tenable. Certain powers of the central government can be decentralized in order to make asymmetrical federalism a viable solution.

The hope of liberalism is that all individuals are to be recognized and treated as equals. The dream of liberalism is for the integrity of people to be protected. When Mill refers to the tyranny of the majority in *On Liberty*, the purpose of rights is to safeguard the dignity of people. Their life projects cannot be dictated to them by the majority. If this were to be the case, it would make for a very shallow definition of democracy and liberalism. Deep pluralism

extends the protection afforded by individual rights to the level of a collectivity. My quarrel is not with the substantive basis of Rawls' original position and the fundamental liberal values of equality. Rather, I want to extend the liberal project, to make it more ambitious. I want rights to include collectivity and the strength of collectivity claims from an appreciation of history.

History itself is not the final arbitrator of the soundness of collective rights claims. We could imagine a case where white South Africans argued that because of history, they have an historical claim to rights. We must look at history, but we must analyze and determine the manner of historical claims. We must not only ask: Is this treaty between two nations valid simply because it exists? Or is it valid because it is the way it should be?

Kymlicka in *Liberalism, Community and Culture* does not consider the validity of historical claims such as Indian treaties in Canada. Kymlicka (1992: 135-161, 182-205) argues that in order to have genuine equality, cultural membership must be taken seriously if individuals are to be truly respected. Cultural membership embeds individuals within interpretative frameworks. In a very recent book, *Multicultural Citizenship*, Kymlicka builds upon his "equality arguments" by considering the role of historical agreements such as Indian Treaties:

Respect for such agreements is important, I believe, not only to respect the self-determination of the minority, but also to ensure that citizens have trust in the actions of government. Historical agreements signed in good faith give rise to legitimate expectations on the part of citizens, who come to rely on the agreements made by governments, and it is a serious breach of trust to renege on them (Kymlicka 1995: 119).

The move by Pierre Elliot Trudeau to rescind Treaty rights was perceived by Indian leaders as a violation of good faith. Throughout the history of Canada, Canadian governments, both federal and provincial have violated Treaties, and have engaged in acts of cultural genocide:

1) Treaties have been ignored when convenient for Canadian governments, 2) Indian children were taken away from their homes and subjected to ideological propaganda of the Church, 3)

Indian languages were outlawed, 4) reserve lands have been continuously expropriated, and 5) the Department of Indian Affairs, because of funding arrangements with Bands, is in the process of undermining Indian Tribal Councils and organizations such as the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians. These actions undermine, to put it quite mildly, the sense of good will between Canadian governments and Indian governments.

Historical agreements can, of course, be amended for a variety of reasons. First, the original agreements might have been made under coercion and one party may seek to redress this through renegotiation. Second, circumstances may change which make the older treaty outdated and in need of revision. Kymlicka does not envision historical agreements as binding in perpetuity, but rather that they be used as a starting point. Collective rights have their roots in history, but their main job must be to empower those who require protection. The interpretation of these rights must be done in such a way as to be fair to all those affected by their application.

The League of Nations took the claims of minority cultures seriously. Ironically, however, this was done only in the context of European nations and it ignored the colonial nature of many European states. The United Nations was a movement away from colonialism between European and New World nations, but still maintained cultural imperialism with nation states. We could see how this applies to Canada. Before WWII, the nation claims of Indians were not taken too seriously. Let us remember that it is only now, 150 years after "conquest," that Indian rights are being negotiated in British Columbia. The League of Nations restricted their activity to mostly European minorities. After WWII, the United Nations pushed for the emergence of New World powers, but ignored the claims of national minorities within these borders. In contemporary discourse, there is much jargon of "violating the internal borders of nation states."

The League of Nations, despite its limitations, also took a proactive role in protecting national minorities. For example, it was argued by League of Nations members that minorities in Poland should be protected. Thornberry writes:

... In districts with substantial numbers of non-Polish speaking nationals, adequate facilities were to be provided by the Polish government to ensure primary instruction in their own language, though the government could make the learning of Polish in such school obligatory (Thornberry 1980: 432).

Control of education for any minority group is absolutely essential if it is to survive as a national minority. Kymlicka outlines the reciprocal recognition of national minorities in this case:

... Germany agreed to accord certain rights and privileges to ethnic Poles residing within its borders, so long as Poland provided reciprocal rights to ethnic Germans in Poland. This treaty system was extended, and given a more multilateral basis under the League of Nations (Kymlicka 1995: 2)

I will describe Derick van Heerden's analysis of South Africa, but for the time being I want to register a couple of points. While the League of Nations between the two world wars strove to recognize the rights of national minorities within European nation states, it did nothing but buttress European colonialism.

Derick van Heerden, in addressing the question of liberal neutrality and cultural pluralism, while not accepting minority rights on an "a priori" basis (van Heerden 1994: 1010), endorses the notion of education for minority cultures. Van Heerden writes: "This question is important because education is perhaps the area where the effects of political neutrality are felt most severely by minority cultures" (van Heerden 1994: 102). Without education rights, the status quo is preserved with the majority culture dominating the minority culture. Language instruction would be given in the language of the majority which is masked as the "neutral" language. Education is a political activity. Indian experience in residential schools echoes this process. Van Heerden stresses the importance of embodiment for the citizen: "Initially ... the

child should be allowed to discover the culture of which he is a member" (van Heerden 1994: 102). The authors of *Pathways to Self-Determination* write: "The Indians' sense of their own nationhood derives also from having their own language and culture and from a conscious knowledge of shared tribal achievements and glories in their past" (*Pathways to Self-Determination* 1984: xv). Van Heerden is not proposing a Walzerlike isolationism, but rather the basis from which the subject can later have a conversation with other members of the society. The point is that we have to know who we are before we can talk to others: "As he grows up the process of discovery should lead the child to new worlds; worlds that may even be foreign to his own culture" (van Heerden 1994: 102).

The attempt to deny a cultural group an education in their own culture is commensurate with the destruction of the culture. I have hesitated to use the term genocide, but I think it is a useful term. Nonetheless, I think that we have to delineate this term, distinguishing between "cultural" and "biological" genocide (Thornberry 1980: 444). Kunz also makes the distinction. He notes the shift after the Second World War:

The United Nations Genocide Convention certainly wants to protect minorities at least against "physical and biological" genocide, although it carefully avoids mentioning cultural genocide, and fails to mention political minorities (Kunz 1955: 285).

I think that biological genocide includes the wholesale destruction of the culture both in terms of cultural artifacts and also in terms of the slaughter of the members of that culture. Recent examples of this would include: 1) the Holocaust, 2) Rwanda, 3) Bosnia and 4) Cambodia. While there has been widescale death of aboriginal peoples in Canada, I do not think that there was the same effort in Canada to destroy aboriginal populations (with the exception of the Beothuk tribe in Newfoundland). There has however been blatant and systematic "cultural genocide" which is "the destruction of the specific characteristics of a group by various measures designed to undermine its cultural and linguistic traditions" (Thornberry 1980: 444).

After the Second World War, there was a shift in that European colonialism was addressed. But, unlike the League of Nations which sought to protect national minorities within nation states, the United Nations took the borders of nation states as sacrosanct.

Thus, the ability of a people to control activities such as education and related activities is essential for the survival of a national minority. This must be one of the most fundamental points for aboriginal demands for self-government. York writes:

Canadians often assume that Indian self-government would entail the creation of a sovereign state or a new level of government. But in reality, self-government has a much more practical meaning for most Indian bands. It begins with the freedom to regain control of individual elements of their community: their schools, courts, health system, and child welfare system. These are institutions that affect people most directly. By asserting their right to make their own decisions in such vital areas, Indian bands are liberating themselves from a state of dependence on government (York 1990: 26).

The James Bay Cree agreement is an example of how self-government could work in other Indian communities. Dan Smith writes:

They are now legally called federal band corporations, similar to municipalities but with provincial-like powers over such central concerns as hunting, fishing and the environment. Most community services, including policies, are delivered by the Cree through their own regional government authority, a school board and a health and social services board, all created earlier through the separate land claim agreement and tied closely to the government of Quebec (Smith 1993: 95).

Another important component of aboriginal claims to self-government has to be the inalienability of their lands. The Federal government holds their lands "in trust" for them. In the summer of 1995, several Indians in British Columbia set up an armed camp and demanded negotiations of outstanding land claims with the Canadian government. Events such as this demonstrate the frustration that Indian people feel over the expropriation of their lands by the federal government. One question that we have to ask is: why does the Canadian government own aboriginal land?

The aboriginal people of Canada, like the Québécois, are nations which were subsumed by the Anglo culture (for most European immigrants who live in English Canada

now identify with this culture). The Indians of Canada, including the Cree, negotiated their treaties with the British crown on a nation to nation basis. Since then the Canadian government has engaged in a systematic attempt at cultural genocide. No longer are Indians treated as nations. While Quebec technically never was a nation as they were a colony of France, they nonetheless have strong historical grounds for nationhood. In the wake of a paper-thin victory for the *Non* side in the 1995 referendum, many premiers and Anglo Canadians went on diatribes about special status for Quebec. Instead of treating Indians and also Québécois as equals, they are treated in a subservient manner. Noel Dyck writes:

Seventeenth century French missionaries were, in effect, the precursors of nineteenth-century Indian administrators and twentieth-century bureaucrats and tutelage agents. What all of these historically specific figures have had in common is their belief that they know what is best for Indians and their willingness to impose exclusive paternalistic tutelage control whenever they, as tutors, feel that Indians are not acting in their best interests (Dyck 1991: 5).

While generally not admitted into political ontologies, there must be room in political discourse for primordial human responses such as pain and anger. Perhaps in the history of discourse in the western tradition these have been dismissed as irrational, but they help to form an important part of lived and embodied modes of scholarship. Certainly as aboriginal people, we must find peace within our minds if we are to have freedom and real, meaningful self-government. I do not think that it is morally justifiable for Indians to bear arms at any point. The use of violence against Canada, be it an armed camp or terrorist activity against the Canadian nation state, or physical violence against citizens of our communities (especially women, whom I will discuss later) would make our cause morally bankrupt in the same way that Quebec's refusal to acknowledge Cree self-government makes their cause morally bankrupt.

Because of the cultural genocide that has been inflicted on Indian people, Indian communities are very damaged and there is a great deal of pain and anger. Several

companies in the South exploit the North for their own benefits. One such example is Cameco in Saskatchewan. The capitalistic exploitation which occurs between the North and South maps nicely onto Habermas' class analysis. Also, residential schools robbed us of our family relations, setting the stage for generations of damaged human beings. We must acknowledge our pain, and the sources of it, but we must also acknowledge how we have hurt those around us. Phil Fontaine said: "Healing and self-government are really one and the same" (Smith 1993: 330). It is only through spiritual well-being that we can have healthy governments. We have to take responsibility for our lives and do everything that we can to improve our communities despite the overwhelming odds that are faced. Clearly, the notion of responsibility for an action must be tied to the notion of self-government. When we search our souls and find true peace we also find true freedom. If we choose to respond with violence, then we will truly be conquered nations. If we respond with peace, we will move towards freedom. We can offer the world the blueprint to our freedom; we can share with the world the ways in which we maintained our identities. This will not only benefit ourselves but will be a gift for all of humanity to share.

Throughout this chapter, I have been discussing the importance of rights, nationhood and national minorities. I have been defending a pluralistic vision of interpreting reality. In the process, I have tried to spell out clearly what self-determination would mean for aboriginal people. Up to this point, I have been trying to defend the embedded nature of understanding, but now I want to turn my attention to defending liberalism as a metanarrative, as an transhistorical standard. My version of liberalism, while stressing embodied, lived experience, also embraces the notions of the transhistorical, universal, and quasi-Kantian perspective.

In *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, Rorty argues for a historical (Hegelian)

understanding of liberalism. For Rorty, liberalism is "embodied in a concrete historical situation" (Rorty 1992: 93). Rorty, in an almost MacIntyre-like manner, does not see liberalism as a metastandard but rather as a local standard. Rorty stresses the historical circumstances, as I do (especially in chapter 1), of how liberalism arose- namely the deconstruction of the older, traditional narrative (medieval story). While Rorty acknowledges history, he has no room for the notion of constraint in his ontology. He argues for a Kuhnian notion of incommensurability. Rorty argues for a series of closed systems, of closed moral vocabularies, which are incommensurate with each other. If we apply this to practice, then there could be no hermeneutical conversation, nor any fusion of interpretive horizons. The moral vocabularies of different people cannot interface in this model, but instead only displace each other.

Rorty is against a metaphysical or foundational defense of liberalism and he notes that his brand of liberalism is "antithetical to Enlightenment rationalism" (Rorty 1992: 57). Rorty is a pragmatic liberal and his liberalism tends to be more of a description of the current political life than a critical foundation for liberalism. Rorty writes that "liberal culture needs an improved self-description rather than a set of foundations" (Rorty 1992: 52). I accused Aristotle (and other communitarians) in chapter one of merely describing political landscapes instead of critically analyzing them. Rorty is very close to Rawls' "political" not "metaphysical" concept. Kymlicka writes: "The reason Rorty rejects 'philosophical metanarrative' is that he believes there are no such things" (Kymlicka 1992: 65). Rorty denies the existence of "metavocabulary" (Rorty 1992: 73). Kymlicka continues his sketch of Rorty's position: "...there are [for Rorty] no reasons which aren't reasons internal to a historical tradition or interpretive community" (Kymlicka 1992: 65). Rorty adopts a postmodern position. By that I mean that he accepts no external normative constraints on narratives. Rorty describes himself as an ironist who "thinks

nothing has an intrinsic nature, a real essence" (Rorty 1992: 7).

Rorty does not critically analyze different narratives. According to Rorty, narratives have merit in virtue of their mere existence. Every narrative has an intrinsic value based on the virtues of its existence. Kymlicka attacks this pragmatic, atheoretical interpretation of liberalism:

When we criticize or defend values of our community, the meaning of our claims is not captured by statements like '*We* do this' or '*They* don't do that.' If *this* is the contrast between Kantian and Hegelian liberals, then Hegelian liberals are simply wrong (Kymlicka 1992: 66).

Kymlicka argues for constraints on narratives. He is arguing for normative analysis over mere description. Unfortunately, for Rorty (and also for Kymlicka who seems to accept Rorty's terminology), the notion of Hegelian liberalism is only misleadingly linked to Hegel. Hegel held that there was a metanarrative, namely the phenomenology of the spirit. While Reason was linked to historical circumstances, it was also transhistorically linked to other narratives.

Given Rorty's commitment to pragmatism, his attack on universalism and metaphysics (he seems to equate these two ideas) seems inevitable. Rorty creates a false dichotomy. He speaks of the "tension between an effort to achieve self-creation by the recognition of contingency and an effort to achieve universality by the transcendence of contingency" (Rorty 1992: 25). Rorty holds that we have to have it one way or the other. Rorty continues his simplistic characterization of the western metaphysical tradition: "... the Western philosophical tradition thinks of a human life as a triumph just insofar as it breaks out of the world of time, appearance, and idiosyncratic opinion into another world- into the world of enduring truth" (Rorty 1992: 29). Rorty, in attacking metaphysics, also seems to be taking a swipe at theory in general: "Metaphysics- in the sense of a search for theories which will get at real essence- tries to make sense of the claim that human beings are something more than centerless webs of beliefs and desires" (Rorty 1992: 88).

In another passage, he makes the connection between the two kinds of liberalism which I characterized earlier: "The metaphysician, in short, thinks that there is a connection between redescription and power, and that the right description can make us free" (Rorty 1992: 90). Rorty has no faith in philosophy as a theoretical activity, viewing it merely as a descriptive activity. Rorty takes a swipe at Habermas and stresses the historical nature of liberalism (he thinks of local vocabularies in a way not unlike MacIntyre³). Rorty writes: "Such agreement does not have (*pace* Habermas) any ahistorical conditions of possibility, but is simply a fortunate product of certain historical circumstances" (Rorty 1992: 195). Rorty's point is that just because *we agree* that liberalism is pragmatically useful in the present, it does not follow that liberalism is transhistorically valid.

The problem with Rorty's liberalism is this: political narratives are considered to be valid merely because of their existence. One could provide the same sort of argument for the existence of Nazi Germany. The practice seems to justify itself. This points to the dangers of a radical, historically based, lived notion of experience. It leads to irrationality and there are no grounds upon which it can be critiqued. The experience is so thick that any attempt to critically analyze it is hampered. There is no possibility of moving transhistorically between narratives. Also, there is a certain incommensurability between different interpretative narratives. The possibility of a hermeneutical exchange between different narratives is eliminated.

The communitarian camp has already attacked the alleged ahistorical pretensions of liberalism. I define a communitarian in the following way: a communitarian is someone who believes that experience is thick and lived and is the sole basis for sorting out political claims. Some communitarians such as Sandel (1982) hold that liberalism ignores the embodied, communal, historical nature of experience and attempts to make every narrative universal and

objective. Amy Gutman characterizes Sandel's book in the following manner: "The central argument of Sandel's book is that liberalism rests on a series of mistaken metaphysical and metaethical views: for example, that the claims of justice are absolute and universal..."

(Gutman 1985: 310). I call this ahistorical because it is a one time assessment of the principles of justice. I, on the other hand, hold that liberalism must be evaluated and shaped through time. The Rawls of 1971 stressed the ahistorical positive pole of Enlightenment. The post-1980 Rawls, like Sandel, retreated from this with his talk of "Kantian constructionism" and the historical "contingency of his principles of justice" (Gutman 1985: 312). I think that there is something to a historical understanding of liberalism, but I do not think that we have to go the extreme of the post-1980 Rawls.

My version of transhistorical liberalism tries to maintain the spirit of Rawls' original position (as found in *A Theory of Justice*) but at the same time take into account the notion of lived experience. Unfortunately, the post-1980 Rawls goes to the extreme of making liberalism only a historical phenomenon. It has no importance or relevance outside of the climate of industrial, democratic societies. He goes too far and falls into a communitarian-like position. The thickness of the experience of people is the democratic background. Thus, Rawls' project does not become a goal which all societies *ought* to have. Rather, the project of political philosophy is merely to describe what *is*. The position of the post-1980 Rawls becomes quite modest and also quite similar to Rorty's.

I propose an alternative reading of the original position which does not slide into a mere pragmatic description of liberalism. The original position could be thought of in the following manner: we could all come to the table with our lived experience. We would engage in a hermeneutical conversation with others around the table. We listen to their experiences and compare them to ours. The experience is not thin, but rather thick. The difference in the

content of our experience can be reexamined in the light of other experiences. The comparison between different narratives allows one to determine normative constraints. Unlike the hermeneutics of Gadamer, my version of a hermeneutical conversation affords the possibility of putting normative constraints on narratives. Through this interchange of narratives with others, we can attempt to see the shortcomings of our own narratives. The result of this process is the normative pool of possibilities which I call the metanarrative.

Some aboriginal traditionalists, who are *de facto* Rortyan communitarians, would like to see nothing change in aboriginal narratives. Kymlicka characterizes collective right claims along these lines: "Collective rights could refer to the right of a group to limit the liberty of its own individual members in the name of group solidarity or cultural purity ..." (Kymlicka 1995: 7). Morris Manyfingers Jr., speaks of the Federal government as having "consistently imposed its own terms and conditions upon the Indian communities by defining those factors which comprise 'Indianness' "(Manyfingers 1986: 64). What constitutes "Indianness"? Male domination over females in the case of Cree culture? Surely a culture does not have an essence, but rather is a cluster of ideals and practices. Manyfingers, in a Gadamerlike move, stresses the role and inevitability of tradition:

In their quest to regain sovereignty that Indians surrendered to European colonizers, the Aboriginal peoples must introduce the aboriginal concept of law based on custom and tradition, a concept which included both common and custom law (Manyfingers 1986: 64).

Manyfingers adds:

The Indian Nations possess inherent sovereignty to govern themselves and their territories in keeping with Indian law and in keeping with the spirit and intent of the Treaties; this inherent sovereignty has been recognized and confirmed through Canadian constitutional law and common law (Manyfingers 1986: 66).

Also, Manyfingers holds that one possible solution to the question of aboriginal citizenship would be that "Indian First Nations could conceivably draw up membership codes with provision for both blood quantum and desire to practice membership values"

(Manyfingers 1986: 71). This raises many important questions such as: Would membership values include male domination of political institutions? Would women be excluded? Is cultural membership only a question of race? Nationality and cultural membership provides the individual with a context of choice. Manyfingers argues for a closure of interpretive horizons (a Walzerlike position) in his article, "Determination of Indian Band Membership: An Examination of Political Will." A strong nostalgia (MacIntyre-like) for the past resonates in this work: "Indian Nation control of Band membership must examine the importance of self-determination, racial preservation and culture in developing membership codes" (Manyfingers 1986: 73). Manyfingers, Rorty and Gadamer need something more substantial than the mere appeal to tradition. He needs a moral foundation, a metaphysical justification of the tradition or a rethinking of that tradition, if required. If he does not do this, he merely repeats Rorty's shortcoming, that of description instead of analysis.

Some traditionalists hold that everything should remain the same as it has been since "time immemorial." I am suspicious of the latter term, "time immemorial," as it serves the same function that the terms *objectivity* and *rationality* do in other contexts. This phrase grounds various claims in authority and gives a certain measure of legitimization. We also have to be suspicious of those traditionalists who do not want to change anything. We have to ask ourselves, "Whose interests are best served by the status quo?" Those whose interests are served by the present system will have little need or desire to think outside their system of thought and material circumstances. Those who have been excluded from power by a traditional narrative, such as aboriginal women, will offer some very succinct criticisms of traditional aboriginal culture. Because of their marginal position, they will be able to very clearly think outside a system of thought.

Gutman applies the same sort criticism to her own European culture:

What exactly does Sandel mean to imply by the sort of civic republicanism "implicit without tradition"? Surely not the mainstream of our tradition that excluded women and minorities, and repressed most significant deviations from white, Protestant morality in the name of the common good. We have little reason to doubt that a liberal politics of rights is morally better than that kind of republicanism (Gutman 1985: 319).

Surely as aboriginal people we must also question our traditional narratives. During the Charlottetown Accord debate, aboriginal women were particularly wary of the drawbacks of collective rights for their communities. Aboriginal women worried that their individual rights would be violated within the confines of aboriginal self-government. It is true that aboriginal women are excluded from political life in Cree communities. But certainly cultures and women can gain more power economically and politically. Kymlicka affirms how group rights need not hamper and restrict, in a negative sense, the aspirations of individuals:

They [i.e. *rights*] do not favour traditional practices over non-traditional life-styles, or religious over non-religious life-styles. They do not impose a particular conception of the 'health of the soul' on the member of minority cultures, or penalize dissenting conceptions (Kymlicka 1992: 191).

When aboriginal women demand to be treated with more equality it is not that they are being culturally tainted with *white* liberalism. Rather, they are responding to the universal desire for equality and respect. They will not be comforted with Rorty's position that moral vocabulary is just, and only, the description of moral practices. Rather, aboriginal women will demand that the practices of our aboriginal communities change. Cultures change and not everything a culture does is inherently valuable. The questioning of traditional values, as in the case of aboriginal women, is not done as esoteric exercise, but rather to improve their lives in a movement towards greater equality. Kymlicka's commitment to seeing historical communities as "open-societies" demonstrates his commitment to the liberal ideal of revisability. Amitai Etzioni's characterization of communitarians as "people committed to creating a new moral, social and public order based on restored communities without allowing puritanism or oppression" (*Economist* Dec. 24, 1994: 33) bears comparison to

Kymlicka's position. The primary point is to acknowledge and strive towards an increased openness of interpretive horizons.

For a very long time, aboriginal women were excluded from power in aboriginal communities. Membership was determined by gender. For example, if an aboriginal male married a white woman, the children from that union would have Indian citizenship, whereas if an Indian woman married a white male, the children from that union would not have Indian citizenship. It may seem that if aboriginal people were truly sovereign they would determine their own membership. Sanders writes: "Indian leaders argue that they have an aboriginal and treaty right to determine their membership. This right has not been recognized in Canadian law. Parliament has assumed the authority to determine Indian membership by legislation" (Sanders 1980: 326). But I think that there are certain grounds for appealing to transhistorical standards. In other words, I do not think that aboriginal people can simply say: "Well this is what we do here and that is that." Aboriginal males cannot give soliloquies about justice between nations if we do not have justice in our own homes.

Violence is rampant in aboriginal communities. I myself grew up in these circumstances. I myself have been physically violent to other males and to female partners. I was in the *Alternatives* program which encourages men to deal with their violent tendencies in a constructive manner. I think that this effort on my part is an active process of changing dominant cultural beliefs. Many Cree males, particularly older ones, are sexist. The culture, formally a plains warrior culture, is very male-orientated. However, I am engaged in the liberal exercise of revising my projects and commitments. Violence is not an inherent part of me and is something that I can change. I can separate myself from my ends (a liberal conception). Sandel's embedded self, with a complete fusion between self and ends, seems to only justify the status quo. With Sandel's model of the self, change (except perhaps for

completely internal organic change) would be impossible as we would all have our societally assigned roles.

Indian males have to acknowledge the injustices that they have inflicted within their communities, if they are to talk with any credibility about justice between the nation of Canada and the Cree nation (or some other Indian nation). The question of aboriginal self-government underlines the importance of addressing the question of male violence and male political power. If violent men have political power, then the legitimacy of aboriginal self-government is dubious and morally bankrupt. All of this stresses the importance of a connection between theory and practice. If I, as a liberal theorist, talk endlessly about injustice, but at the same time inflict injustices upon others, then my task as a political theorist becomes quite hollow and meaningless. It is only when I make every attempt to be a good human being, treating others as equals, that my task as a liberal theorist is, in any sense, meaningful.

Interpretive horizons can shift. The communitarian story which does not in any way attempt to constrain narrative with transhistorical standards is implausible. The communitarian wants to acknowledge the validity of moral vocabularies only with certain historical interpretative horizons. Kymlicka, like myself, wants to argue that liberalism is a metanarrative that can evaluate all moral vocabularies because of its normativity. "Open-societies" which emphasize equality and pluralism embody the ideal moral vocabulary. There is undoubtedly a sense of risk involved in an open-ended society. A culture which did not take extraordinary steps to protect itself would perhaps change radically over a period of time. I think that the possibility of radical culture change is the price to pay for individual liberty and an insurance against the tyranny of the majority. The minority could be thought of as a microcosm of the larger society. While minority cultures are protected from the tyranny of the majority culture by collective rights, members of the minority culture are protected from the tyranny of the

majority of their individual cultures by individual rights.

By examining the position of women in aboriginal communities, I argued that liberalism is a transhistorical narrative. I tried to do this by showing how aboriginal women are not just responding to white liberalism, but rather that their concerns have transhistorical validity. At this point, I would like to use liberalism in an examination of aboriginal cultures (in particular religion).

I do not want to leave the impression that if the problem of equality for women in Indian communities is settled, then there will automatically be justice for Indian people. Justice must be thought of as a cluster concept which contains many elements which cannot be narrowed to one component. Clearly, justice must also involve recognition of asymmetrical federalism and the right to develop language instruction for native languages. The openness of the society might be limited by such a concept to an extent, but the rights of individuals would not be overly infringed upon with such a measure as mandatory language education.

Interpretative horizons shift in religious matters as well. Kymlicka brings up the example of the Pueblo Indians. He writes: "Some American Indian bands are essentially theocracies, with an official religion" (Kymlicka 1992: 195) Thus, in these cases, there is risk that the horizon of meaning becomes closed and static. People are not free to question the values of the community. There is allowed to be only one interpretation of life, traditional Pueblo religion, that cannot be threatened. There is no thinking outside of the system of thought- the system of interpreting reality. Any change to the status quo is perceived as a threat to the culture. Undoubtedly, individual Pueblo Indians might become dissatisfied with some aspects of traditional life. They are, in Kymlicka's story, free to question the value of the elements of their cultural narratives: "The ability of each member of the Pueblo reservation, for example, to live in the community is not threatened by allowing Protestant members to

express their religious beliefs" (Kymlicka 1992: 196). While some individual Pueblos undoubtedly will not want to practice their traditional religion (or perhaps not all of it), this does not mean that they have ceased being Pueblo Indians. While cultures change, there has to be a degree of continuity. Habermas writes: "Apparently, traditions can retain legitimizing force only as long as they are turned out of interpretive systems that guarantee continuity and identity" (Habermas 1975: 71). Changes in cultures are typically a function of the tradition from which they emerge.

In his recent book, *Multicultural Citizenship*, Kymlicka returns to the example of the Pueblos. He notes that "the tribal government of the Pueblo Indians discriminates against those members of the tribe who reject the traditional religion of the group" (Kymlicka 1995: 153). While the collective rights of the Pueblo people are protected, the rights of individual Pueblos are violated:

Indeed, restricting religious freedom... violates one of the reasons liberals have for wanting to protect cultural membership- namely, that, membership in a culture enables informed choice about how to lead one's life. These sorts of internal restrictions cannot be justified or defended within a liberal conception of minority rights (Kymlicka 1995: 153).

Likewise, the Pueblo community, while having collective rights, violates the rights of individuals. Kymlicka points to the Ottoman empire where groups were protected, but individuals within these groups had no individual rights: "The millet system was, in effect, a federation of theocracies. It was a deeply conservative and patriarchal society, antithetical to the ideals of personal liberty endorsed by liberals from Locke to Kant to Mill" (Kymlicka 1995:157). While Kymlicka defends group rights, he also defends the rights of individuals within these groups.

Thus, Kymlicka's defense of rights has two layers: 1) the rights of groups, and 2) the rights of individuals. Kymlicka's position incorporates a defense of both: "... a liberal view requires *freedom within* the minority group, and *equality between* the minority and majority

groups..." (Kymlicka 1995: 154). If Kymlicka only included the rights of groups in his position, then he would be a communitarian. The existence of the group right would defend a common idea of the Good. But, by including the second item, Kymlicka's position is comfortably liberal. The rationale for defending group rights within Kymlicka's position was not to defend *necessarily* a common notion of the Good, but rather it was to respect the context of choice for individuals:

Liberalism is committed to (perhaps even defined by) the view that individuals should have the freedom and capacity to question and possibly revise the traditional practices of their community, should they come to see them as no longer worthy of their allegiance (Kymlicka 1995: 152).

The above examples demonstrate something fundamental about the view of the self that I am adopting. I am advocating a view of the self which can change and adapt itself to new conditions. One can critically evaluate one's culture and choose to reject certain aspects of this culture. People are not *cultural robots*, and can reject items from their cultural narratives. One such example is the treatment of women within patriarchal societies. Another example is the choice to reject certain aspects of traditional religions. In fact, I would say that the liberal cultural ethic that I advocate allows people to withdraw from their cultures if they choose. This is another instance of a clash between a liberal point of view and that of a traditionalist. The liberal will always see the possibility of cultural change, whereas the traditionalist wants to ossify practices and create a cultural metaphysics. Here I take metaphysics to be defined in the Rortian and Diltheyian sense (i.e. closure of interpretative horizons).

I would like to add one thing about the transhistorical validity of liberalism in this context. Liberalism is the ability to think outside of a system of thought. This entails the notion of revisability and the notion that historical narratives of various communities can change. The traditional narrative of medieval Europe was dismantled through the advent of the modern

science. Because there was no development of the natural sciences in aboriginal communities, one may accuse aboriginal people of living in a closed system. I do not think that there is much to this argument. Aboriginal people have had a radical Enlightenment. This does not mean that we have been radically "enlightened" by European culture, but that our contact with European peoples has forced us to rethink our traditional interpretive frameworks. We have experienced firsthand the adverse effects of modern technology (I will explore this in greater depth in the next chapter), demonstrating the fusion of theory/ practice in our lived experience of instrumental rationality.

A rethinking of liberalism has to introduce the notion of constraint or adequacy. It cannot be communitarian, or a Rortian free-for-all (Rorty's postmodern rhetoric unfortunately has a great deal of currency, and is considered fashionable by many). What I say about Rorty also applies to Indian leaders who wish to keep things the same with an appeal to traditions. The notion of transhistorical (quasi-Kantian) liberalism stresses the existence of human nature (which many in the postmodern camp deny), making a universal, hermeneutical conversation possible with different interpretive horizons fusing with each other creating a rich and vibrant metanarrative. Pluralism, at its best, seeks to take the best from every narrative to construct an ideal metanarrative. The environmental ethic of aboriginal people is one such item that can be added to the metanarrative of our age (one of the subjects of the next chapter). This interpretation of historical narratives is a hermeneutical conversation that involves all of humankind and is transhistorical.

ENDNOTES:

1. Perhaps the term *Anglo* might appear somewhat slangy but I think that it does the job that I want it to do. The term is undoubtedly used extensively in contemporary political discussion and is useful as a rhetorical term. Originally, in the course of the history of this country, the term would refer to people of a British background. Through time, various European groups have gravitated towards this culture group, and I would characterize it as consisting of persons who speak English as their primary language.

2. The gypsies are a counter example of where this would not really apply. Also, Jewish people before 1948 really had no state and being Jewish was not tied to being in a location as Jews were living all over the world.

3. Except that MacIntyre thinks that one vocabulary, namely that of Catholic Christianity, has transhistorical validity. This poses a deep and fundamental paradox for MacIntyre and anyone who wishes to follow his line of thought.

CHAPTER THREE: THE LIMITS OF REASON: TOWARDS AN OPEN-ENDED CONCEPTION OF RATIONALITY

A hermeneutical approach presumes that there is a shared system of understanding between individuals, grounded within interpretative horizons. As I have argued, our experience of reality is not universalistic and thin, but rather it is thick and lived. The interpretative discourse in which we participate frames the manner in which we understand the world around us, acting as a sort of filter. No interpretative horizon can fully describe the phenomenological possibilities of experience. Conceptual holes exist and there will always be a difference between the discourse (narrative or interpretative horizon) and the world of possible experience. I differ from others in the hermeneutical tradition, notably Gadamer, because I argue, to a degree that they do not, that the materiality of reality constrains our interpretations. I hold that the physical world and the findings of science constrain narratives and discourse. I shall explore in this chapter the impact of modern science upon the manner in which we think about "objectivity," "constraint," and "adequacy." The narrative of science, at least according to Gellner and Taylor, is the most adequate interpretation of reality.

In both the Greek and modern Enlightenments, a tension existed between objectivity and pluralism. In the modern Enlightenment, the natural sciences dismantled the traditional narrative of established Christianity. Because of the successes of the natural sciences, scientific methodology was considered paradigmatic of rational activity. Liberalism, with its more pluralistic conception of rationality, developed contemporaneously and was a product of the same historical impulses. The deconstruction of the moral narrative of established Christianity left a vacuum in terms of a collective, societal conception of the Good. The

narrative of science punched holes into the conceptual scheme of established Christianity. To some extent liberalism has filled these gaps. Science developed into the ideology of instrumental rationality which, at least in part, seeks to dominate the earth for primarily intersubjective interests. In this chapter, I shall outline several critiques of instrumental rationality. In the end, I shall argue for a meta-hermeneutical conversation which will expand the limits of rationality. While I discuss several critiques of science, I view science as providing a basis for constraining all contemporary narratives.

Susan Bordo in her book, *The Flight to Objectivity: Essays on Cartesianism and Culture*, laments the process whereby the holistic thinking of the medieval life world moves towards a more instrumental, reductionist mode of thinking. Bordo sketches the climate during the period of the early Enlightenment: "No longer was there one true church-sensationally increased levels of exploration and commerce with other cultures had radically upset the eurocentricism that prevailed in the medieval era" (Bordo 1987: 13). The "closed horizon" (to use Dilthey's term) of the medieval period was forcibly opened with the advent of modern science and also contact with other peoples. The same process occurs, but to a lesser extent, to the Greeks during their Enlightenment which is fully documented in Herodotus' *Histories*. The life-world of the medieval period was both intellectually and materially changed. Other cultures provide a reference point which acts as the basis for enabling one to step outside of the norms of the community. The questioning of traditional values is paradigmatic of the rationality of liberalism.

The *Paradox of Enlightenment* is the tension between the *objective* claims of science and the *pluralistic* claims of liberalism. Ernest Gellner sketches this out:

Liberalism, tolerance, pluralism, incline many to find pleasure in the idea of the multiplicity of means and visions; but the equally reputable and enlightened desire for objectivity and universality leads to a desire that at least the world and truth be but one, and not many (Gellner 1994: 182).

The liberal plurality of visions conflicts with the objectivity of science. Science was an attempt to understand universal laws of nature. Universalism found expression also in political terms: "The pursuit of universals, of the unity of men, is also on occasion inspired by the desire to underwrite the brotherhood and equality of man" (Gellner 1994: 182). In Gellner's account, there was originally a need for a plurality of visions but eventually one narrative was proven to be the most accurate at describing reality. Charles Taylor in his article, "Rationality," offers a similar argument.

I want to critically examine the *pluralistic* (or *subjectivist*) pole of Enlightenment which stresses self-creation. While a pluralism of interpretative horizons exists, we have to break out of the hermeneutical circle because "objective reality" acts as a constraint for narratives. The "successes" of the modern sciences have decisively framed the manner in which we think about adequacy and objective reality. Liberalism, like the sciences, attempted to define reason in universal terms. John Rawls' principles of justice function in ahistorical and thin terms. After the medieval story was deconstructed, there was a vacuum in the domain of moral and political philosophy. Liberalism filled this vacuum by attempting to "objectively" ground pluralism. The environmental crisis provides a new historical phenomenon which forces us to rethink the rationality of both the natural sciences and liberalism (which are linked). The environmental crisis challenges the intersubjective, human based, interests of liberalism.

I want to argue that different modes of rationality can complement each other. The objectivism of science puts constraints on the narrative of liberalism. Conversely, instrumental rationality has limitations. The narrative of liberalism already plays a central role in the metanarrative of contemporary discourse. In addition, an examination of Douglas Cardinal's aesthetic philosophy, will help us to understand the limitations of instrumental reason. These

different modes of interpreting reality allow us to see different phenomenological aspects of common objects. With this rethinking of rationality, the philosophy of aboriginal people can also be incorporated into the metanarrative of our age.

I shall be looking at two examples of instrumental rationality and in turn three major critiques of instrumental rationality. I think that I should try to define instrumental rationality. Habermas articulates the deconstruction of tradition in terms of changes of an older communal narrative: "Industrial society frees itself from historical traditions and orients itself to technical control of natural substrata" (Habermas 1988: 17). The freeing of man from traditional narratives accelerated the manner in which human beings could instrumentally dominate nature. In an article entitled, "The Undermining of Western Rationalism through the Critique of Metaphysics: Martin Heidegger," Habermas writes that "with the collapse of religious metaphysical world views, all normative standards have lost credit before the single remaining authority-science" (Habermas 1987: 111). There have been many successes as a result of the application of science. In the dialectic of Enlightenment, one can see an ongoing tension between the old ideas of *nomos* and *physis* (which I talked about in chapter one).

The emergence of the natural sciences allows one to think outside of the preëxisting historical tradition. The strong pole of Enlightenment is positivism, which Habermas defines as the view that "[k]nowledge is implicitly defined by the achievement of the sciences" (Habermas 1981: 62). Habermas adds later: "Positivism stands and falls with the principle of scientism, that is that the meaning of knowledge is defined by what the sciences do and can thus be adequately explicated through the methodological analysis of scientific procedures" (Habermas 1981: 67). Positivism, with its deconstruction of the traditional narrative, allows us a measure of freedom from the more traditional narrative: "... it frees subjects from the organized compulsions of the natural substratum and gives them access to a sphere of

subjective freedom beyond society" (Habermas 1988: 17). Eventually, positivism (as defined by Habermas), becomes a dominant narrative itself: "As instrumental, reason assimilated itself to power and thereby relinquished its critical force- that is the *final*/disclosure of ideology critique applied to itself" (Habermas 1987: 119). The first two phases of the dialectic of Enlightenment are: 1) the deconstruction of the older narrative and 2) the emergence of the method of the previous deconstruction as a dominant narrative itself.

I devote a considerable amount of time to examining Descartes' relationship and importance to the Enlightenment. I would like to make a few remarks about my rationale for focus on him. First, many in the literature focus on Descartes (Bordo, Heidegger and indirectly, Douglas Cardinal). Second, in terms of philosophical literature, Descartes emblematically represents the shift from medieval philosophy to modern philosophy and thus has a great deal of historical importance. Third, while Descartes' own scientific endeavours may not have been successful (his innovations in geometry, however, were certainly influential), his philosophy serves as a sort of manifesto for the scientific revolution. Central to my argument about instrumental rationality is the notion of detachment and antiholistic thinking. Both of these themes are quite pronounced in Descartes.

In the age of Descartes, orthodox Christianity began to lose its hegemony over truth. A small core of humanists, including Descartes, began to question the Catholic story. Despite his ultimate rebellion against the Church, there are many references in the Cartesian corpus to his Catholic education: "But we are now freed from the oath which bound us to our master's words and are old enough to be no longer subject to the rod" (Descartes 1985a: 11). He intimates in this passage that he is ready to move to a new way of thinking. He has left the "control of [his] teacher" (Descartes 1985a: 115). In another passage, he refers to his Catholic education as his "old foundations" (Descartes 1985a: 117). He talks about students

who are still clouded in their understanding of truth: "... saturated with his opinions in their youth (since these are the only opinions taught in the schools) and this has so dominated their outlook that they have been unable to arrive at knowledge of true principles" (Descartes 1985a: 182).

The project of the Enlightenment was, at least at first, to break down the power of established Christianity through the development of an autonomous new science and methodology. Descartes writes at the beginning of the *Meditations* about his doubt: "Some years ago I was struck by the large number of falsehoods that I had accepted as true in my childhood, and by the highly doubtful nature of the whole edifice that I had subsequently based on them" (Descartes 1985b: 12). Through doubt, Descartes is calling into question the interpretative framework which formerly grounded all of his beliefs. Descartes continues: "I realized that it was necessary, once in the course of my life, to demolish everything completely and start right from the foundations if I wanted to establish anything at all in the sciences that was stable and likely to last" (Descartes 1985b: 12).

Essential to liberalism is the ability to think outside of a system. The older system, or interpretative horizon, acts as a sort of reference point. The influx of new experience and data allows the interpretative horizon to be understood from a different perspective. In the *Principles of Philosophy*, this notion of Descartes as revolutionary is found quite clearly. Descartes writes: "*The seeker after truth, must once in the course of his life, doubt everything, as far as it is possible*" (Descartes 1985a: 193). The ability to call into question many items that are within an interpretative horizon is a quintessential liberal act. Doubt allows one to question the foundations of any interpretative horizon. Descartes is prudent by putting constraints upon the doubting process: "*The scope of the will is wider than that of the intellect, and this is the cause of error*" (Descartes 1985a: 204). Thus, while doubt may help

deconstruct faulty narratives, it is constrained by objective reality.

Descartes used an Archimedean point in order to ground his narrative to prevent an infinite regression of justification. Descartes felt that it was essential for concepts and ideas to be clearly delineated from each other. These are simple epistemic facts. But the foundation of his whole system is the doubting ego. Descartes writes: " ' / *am thinking, therefore I exist*' was so firm and sure that all the most extravagant suppositions of the sceptics were incapable of shaking it, I decided that I could accept it without scruple as the first principle of the philosophy I was seeking" (Descartes 1985a: 127). Schouls adds that Descartes' "*system of knowledge, the cogito* is indeed Descartes' Archimedean point" (Schouls 1989: 50). The doubting self is similar to the self in John Rawls' original position. Neither function in the context of a community, but rather function in terms of individualistic introspection. Both the Cartesian ego and the Rawlsian self are stripped of their contingent properties and understand reality from an ahistorical perspective.

The Cartesian project stressed the causation between necessity and rationality: "Reason or the truth dominates the will when we pay attention to what is clear and distinct" (Schouls 1989: 46). Descartes summarizes the point of the method in the *Discourse on Method*: "*rightly conducting one's reason and seeking the truth in the sciences*" (Descartes 1985a: 186). The only way we can understand truth is by overcoming the particularities of our cultural and historical communities: "Overcoming partiality and obtaining facility in the method is to allow one to break through cultural relativism into the realm of absolute truth" (Schouls 1989: 27). According to Descartes, reason is ahistorical and not embodied in any historical culture.

Descartes stresses clarity and is fundamentally opposed to holistic notions. Ideas are clear "*per se*" and not "*inter aliud*" (Descartes 1985a: 22). Contextuality, for Descartes, clouds

reason and truth. Things are best understood when they are isolated and made into universal propositions. In order to be considered as knowledge, ideas have to meet these "criteria of clarity and distinctiveness" (Descartes 1985a: 20). These simple ideas also serve to ground the narrative and prevent an infinite justification regress: "These criteria therefore demand that at the foundation of science there have to be utterly simple ideas ..." (Descartes 1985a: 20). With this starting point, deduction becomes the method through which the ideas are related to each other. Descartes writes: "Deduction, therefore, remains as our sole means of compounding things in a way that enables us to be certain of their truth" (Descartes 1985a: 48).

Peter Schouls argues that all of the key concepts of Enlightenment philosophy exist in Descartes' writings. Schouls writes of Descartes' project that it "is about *freedom, mastery* and *progress*, primarily as these concepts function in Descartes' works. The triad represents the core of Enlightenment thought" (Schouls 1989: 3). Descartes believed in "universality of reason" (Schouls 1989: 23). Schouls adds: "Descartes assumes that truth is objective, absolute and attainable only in one particular way" (Schouls 1989: 23). Historical understanding burdens the clear apprehension of the truth: "cultural context burdens him with the kind of prejudice which seems to make progress [sic] ... impossible" (Schouls 1989: 65). There was also the freedom from "social oppression" (Schouls 1989: 4) to which I have already alluded.

Part of this process was *mastery* over nature which resulted in historical *progress*. The new science and methodology was to provide the foundations for a new narrative that would ameliorate the living conditions of humanity. Descartes summarizes his pragmatic project which is a "practical philosophy which might replace the speculative philosophy taught in the schools" (Descartes 1985a: 142). In this century, it is easy to see ways in which narratives of

instrumental rationality have been morally problematic and must be partially deconstructed. Schouls writes: "It is through mechanics, medicine, and morals that I gain mastery over nature and so increase my autonomy" (Schouls 1989: 101). A pragmatic programme in philosophy actively seeks to change the material conditions surrounding the life-world of human beings. Descartes states that the goal of his project is to gain "mastery of nature" (Descartes 1985: 143). Schouls adds: "Reason serves the passion for dominion; scientific knowledge is the instrument which is to make me the master of my fate" (Descartes 1985: 103).

Descartes wrote before the scientific revolution transformed, in a material manner, the way in which human beings led their lives. Many people worked in difficult and toiling conditions with limited economic reward. Furthermore, many socio-political obstacles prevented people from challenging the way in which existing wealth was distributed. In the previous *Weltanschauungen* of the medieval world, power was in the hands of the church and aristocrats. Nature still dominated human lives through natural disasters and disease. The vast majority of people experienced material impoverishment with the existing wealth being controlled by religious and political elites. Because the elites controlled the flow of material wealth, they had the capacity to shape and determine the dominant narrative. Political and religious elites attempted to justify their hegemony over power and wealth through the doctrine of the divine right of kings. The doctrine provided a means of legitimating the discourse of the elites as well as their control of wealth.

Many individuals of European political communities were subordinated by the closure of the interpretative horizon of the medieval age and also by the unfair distribution of wealth. It was against the interest of the dominant elite groups to change the narratives and distributions of wealth. In order to shatter the equilibrium between the discourse (interpretative horizon) and the material conditions of the age, a revolution of both ideology and material

means of production was necessary. The modern Enlightenment contained the necessary conditions for changing the modes of production for both meaning (e.g. interpretative frameworks) and materiality (e.g. the ability to instrumentally manipulate the physical world). By destroying the hegemony of traditional practices, freedom for the majority of people became possible.

Schouls notes that one of the key Enlightenment ideals is to be free from the "arbitrary domination of others" (Schouls 1989: 4). Ironically, the instrumental rationality of modern science has done much to facilitate the domination of non-western peoples including aboriginal Canadians (I will say more about this in later sections). Throughout this chapter, I will examine the Cartesian notion of progress, which still has currency in contemporary discourse. Descartes offers us a linear, "closed" conception of progress. In its place, I hope to offer a more open-ended model of rationality. In the *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*, Descartes defines method:

By a 'method' I mean reliable rules which are easy to apply and such that if one follows them exactly, one will never take what is false to be true or fruitlessly expend one's mental efforts, but will gradually and constantly increase one's knowledge till one arrives at a true understanding of everything within one's capacity (Descartes 1985a: 14).

Because of the far-reaching impact that the Cartesian project has had upon the modern world, Schouls thinks of "*Descartes as Revolutionary*." (Schouls 1989: 14). Descartes wanted to create a new, objective foundation, upon which secure knowledge could be systematically developed. The Cartesian project pulverized medieval metaphysics and pushed for a more pragmatic philosophy of instrumental rationality. Instrumental rationality was touted as the true way to understanding, a universal reason. Reason forced people to think outside of the old system of thought and to forge a new mode for understanding the world: "Reason commands revolution and, if its command is obeyed, reason promises mastery" (Schouls 1989: 107). Later, we will see how Taylor's remarks echo this belief. Schouls acknowledges

the inherent tension between this objectivity of reason and the promise of freedom. It demonstrates the dialectical tension between objectivity and pluralism. The roots of both instrumental scientific rationality (which purports to be *objective*) and liberal rationality (which purports to be *pluralistic*), can be found in Descartes.

First, an historically important articulation of instrumental rationality can be found in Descartes. With the shattering of the traditional modes of production of the medieval life world, a new narrative was needed to fill the interpretative vacuum. Ironically, the freedom brought about by the modern Enlightenment eventually led to the subordination of non-western peoples and also the physical world. The new modes of production allowed human beings, who were originally Europeans, to more effectively manipulate the material world (and also other groups of human beings). The ideology of science and the corresponding changes of production promised to free human beings from the shackles of the oppressive socio-political structures of the medieval life world. Because of the impressive manner in which the narrative of science has allowed us to instrumentally manipulate the material world, it does demand a certain degree of attention. Descartes' writings articulate the theoretical basis for a new methodology which supported the emergence of the project of the scientific revolution.

Second, the roots of liberal individualism can be found in Descartes. My position does not necessarily entail that Descartes' position was itself a causal agent in the emergence of liberalism, but rather that it provides a reflection and possible theoretical justification for the liberal ontology of individualism. The doubting ego moved outside the narrative and engaged in an act of deconstruction. In chapter two, I examined the relationship between individual and community: a balance must exist between individual rights and collective rights (or the right of self-determination for nations). An individual, like the Cartesian doubting ego, can always question an interpretative horizon.

Comparison can be made between the Cartesian doubting ego and the 1971 Rawlsian view of the self. For both, the doubting process was an individual process. Descartes' doubting ego is a heuristic device that represents a process in which every individual could engage. Rawls' process of reflective equilibrium is also such a heuristic device. Both heuristic devices assume an ahistorical or universalistic stance. An important distinction must be made between the individualism of both Rawls and Descartes, and mine. While I stress that the self is not necessarily bound to an interpretative narrative, I hold that the self always reacts and responds to thick and lived experience. Unlike Rawls and Descartes, I hold that the doubting process, the questioning of traditional mores, must involve others in a hermeneutical conversation, if it is to be meaningful. The communal process of determining a political consensus, in which many people engage in a hermeneutical conversation, has been embodied many times in history. Traditionally, Indian people sat in circles to determine a course of action with each participant having the right to speak.

A politics of Otherness creates hierarchies with the dominant group subordinating other groups. Descartes sees his methodology as the distinguishing mark of European human beings: "Thus we consider that it is this philosophy alone which distinguished us from the most savage and barbarous peoples, and that a nation's civilization depends on the superiority of the philosophy which is practical there" (Descartes 1985a: 180). Descartes distinguishes people from animals. Descartes notes:

The brute beasts, who have only their bodies to preserve, are continually occupied in looking for food to nourish them; but human beings, whose most important part is the mind, should devote their main efforts to the search for wisdom, which is the true food of the mind (Descartes 1985a: 180).

It is only human beings in Descartes' writings that are considered sentient beings because of their mental capacities. Furthermore, animals are described as "automatons" (Descartes 1988: 44).

Descartes also describes the body, including those of humans, as "machine" (Descartes 1988: 44). In Descartes' ontology, an almost unbridgeable rift emerges between the mind and the body. The objectification of the world is an important component of scientific rationality. Descartes, in another passage describes animals as machines: "For we can conceive of a machine so constructed that it utters words, and even utters words which correspond to bodily actions causing a change in its organs (e.g. if you touch it in one spot it asks what you want of it, if you touch it in another it cries out that you are hurting it, and so on" ...) (Descartes 1985a: 140).

In the *Treatise on Man* Descartes writes: "I suppose the body to be nothing but a statue or machine made of earth ..." (Descartes 1985a: 99). The body itself is made into "Other." The *res cogitans* is a separate substance which can function independent of the body and is paradigmatic of the whole enterprise of ahistorical Reason. Universal principles are derived independently from embodied experience which I think is one of the defining features of instrumental rationality (and what Douglas Cardinal calls "the ego-man").

I wanted to show the historical roots of instrumental rationality through my discussion of Descartes. I want now to turn to Charles Taylor to illustrate the fact that the essential tenets of instrumental reason have not changed. Charles Taylor's article, "Rationality," is a contemporary argument for a similar position.

Charles Taylor is undoubtedly one of the most important theorists of our day. His contributions to political philosophy have been immense and he is one of the leaders of the communitarian camp in political philosophy. He stresses the thickness of our experience throughout his writings and implies that there are authoritative horizons which ground the actions and intentionalities of agents. However, unlike Rawls and Descartes, Taylor stresses the importance of community. Thus, Descartes' mode of instrumental rationality could be

called individualistic, whereas Taylor's could be called communitarian.

In his essay, "Rationality," Taylor argues for an instrumental conception of rationality by comparing it to brands of rationality found in other cultures. By comparing the different interpretative horizons of different cultures, Taylor is engaged in a sort of hermeneutical act. Taylor asks the hermeneutical question: "... are there standards of rationality which are valid across cultures? " (Taylor 1994: 88). The question brings in the notion of the possibility of commensurability between two systems of interpretation. He argues for a "weak version of incommensurability" (his term), but he does this in such a way that the criteria of adequacy are maintained. Taylor brings up the sensationalistic and simplistic example of Azande witchcraft to demonstrate the incommensurability between European and non-European traditions. He uses this example to argue against Peter Winch who had discussed the Azande case. By using such a sensationalistic example, Taylor (and others) make it easy to label non-western patterns of behaviour as irrational. He creates a politics of Otherness by seeking to show that non-European views are inherently different from European ones.

Taylor outlines the following set of tenets of Azande witchcraft, namely their views that: 1) after death, the intestines of suspected witches are examined, checking for a "witchcraft substance," and 2) witchcraft is inherited. Given beliefs (1) and (2) it would seem that: "A very few post-mortem results would settle the question for everyone for all time" (Taylor 1994: 88). Yet, the Azande continue to treat the question of whether person X or Y was a witch as open-ended. Evans-Pritchard, whose position Taylor outlines in the article, takes these beliefs to be irrational because they are contradictory.

Peter Winch in his article, "Understanding a Primitive Society," argues that the Azande are not irrational. The thesis of his paper is that western people have a unique standard of rationality, and that consequently these standards cannot be applied to the Azande. Winch

argues for a pluralism of standards of rationality and also for incommensurability between interpretative horizons. There are no tests of adequacy of interpretation of reality and this represents the negative pole of Enlightenment- that of self-creation. The negative pole of Enlightenment stresses freedom and pluralism. I hold that Winch's position about the incommensurability between the different interpretative frameworks amounts to relativism. This incommensurability must be made concrete in order to differentiate it from Taylor's notion of incommensurability. Winch's thought is inspired by Wittgenstein's thought. There is a stress on the incommensurability of different life-worlds.

Habermas stresses the paradox of Enlightenment in Wittgenstein's thought:

In Wittgenstein's late philosophy, the disempowered monopolistic language of the natural sciences has given way to a pluralism of natural languages that no longer capture reality theoretically within the framework of a single worldview, but rather practically within different lifeworlds (Habermas 1988: 126).

As long as signs can be cohesively related to each other, then sets of signs can be thought of as coherent. One could even imagine a member of the Azande culture coming up with a rule which could link beliefs (1) and (2), above, together.

If there is no notion of adequacy of justification, then it seems we have arrived at a Rortian free-for-all. For Winch, the language game of the Azande cannot be translated into the language game of modern, western culture. I think that Winch is begging the question of the impossibility of translating different language games into each other. In his own work, Winch is interpreting the Azande belief system which he could not do if this belief system was incommensurable with western culture. Central to Winch's project is the exploration of foreign cultures. Habermas writes: "Getting to know a foreign culture is possible only to the extent to which a successful translation between it and one's own culture has taken place" (Habermas 1988: 137). The activity of fusing interpretative horizons is the hermeneutical conversation of interchanges of meaning. It is "the field of hermeneutics, which Wittgenstein did not enter"

(Habermas 1988: 137). Translation and interpretation require the possibility of commensurability between different interpretative horizons. While Winch needs this for his project, his radical relativism makes a rational bridgehead between different interpretative frameworks impossible.

Wittgenstein moves from radical objectivism to a radical pluralism of standards of rationality. There is a movement from a science based understanding of rationality to an essentially coherentist conception grounded solely in language. The problem with Wittgenstein, as well as, Winch is that there is no notion of objective constraint in their pictures of rationality. A sort of Rortian free for all emerges. Wittgenstein, like Rorty, attacks the notion of metalanguage and metanarrative, pushing instead for a radical sort of subjectivism: "Wittgenstein ... was doubtful about the conditions of possibility of a metalanguage" (Habermas 1988: 132).

Taylor cheerfully grants Winch that different forms of life are incommensurable (but not that they are so to the point where we cannot compare them). The activities of these language games, those of the Azande and also of modern science, cannot be directly compared and translated into each other's system of interpretation. Taylor holds that the two interpretative frameworks are different but he has a different rationale for this than Winch. "Two activities are incompatible in practice when as a matter of fact you couldn't carry them both on at the same time" (Taylor 1994: 98). The rules of language games contradict each other. Taylor adds: "For the rules which partly define these games prescribe actions in contradiction to each other" (Taylor 1994: 98). He uses the games of football and chess to illustrate his point. Using the example of the comparison between chess and football, Taylor notes that the notion of inconsistency does not encompass enough to be an adequate definition of rationality, for one cannot transport the rules of one game into another.

Unlike Winch, Taylor is not saying that there is no metalanguage or metaconversation which would inevitably involve all cultures. Taylor does not grant that there are no transcultural standards through which we could judge different cultures. Both cultures are simply using different rules to construct different pictures of the world. Taylor adds that "incommensurable standards are rivals" (Taylor 1994: 99). The picture that Winch gives us is one depicting both cultures quietly go on playing their language games in isolation of each other. Taylor rightly points out, that the "successes" of the natural sciences force a comparison between the two. Technology forces us to take the scientific narrative seriously, and impels one to question traditional narratives, and this standing outside allows us to note conceptual holes.

Taylor holds that modern, western culture describes the world more correctly than older, non-western interpretative horizons. The success that the natural sciences have had in instrumentally manipulating the physical universe seems to verify this. Taylor defines his notion of instrumentality:

The basic point is that given the kind of beings we are, embodied and active in the world, and given the way that scientific knowledge extends and supersedes our ordinary understanding of things, it is impossible to see how it could fail to yield further and more far-reaching recipes for action (Taylor 1994: 101).

Increased scientific knowledge allows human beings to manipulate the world in more effective ways. The ability to manipulate the physical universe is, in many ways, the fulfilment of Descartes' dream of progress. Increased technological manipulation cannot be ignored: "... once a spectacular degree of technological control is achieved, it commands attention and explanation" (Taylor 1994: 102). The reason for this respect is that the narrative of instrumental rationality corresponds more accurately to the external world than to other narratives.

Because of the greater degree of accuracy, the narrative of modern science is more

rational. The distortion of conceptual schemes gradually decreases over time as a more accurate correspondence to objective reality is achieved. He writes: "The superiority of modern science is that it has a very simple explanation for this: that it has greatly advanced our understanding of the material world" (Taylor 1994: 103). He implies that the modern world view has nothing substantial to learn from the world view of the Azande people, whereas the Azande have everything to learn from the world view of modern science. Taylor's notion of incommensurability demands that ultimately we accept only one story. In his position, there is no possibility of the stories being broken down into elements to create a new story. Later, I want to show that Taylor's either/ or dichotomy of competing narratives is very misleading.

The alleged cultural superiority of European culture lies in its superior theoretical understanding of the world. Taylor notes that this understanding began in Ancient Greece, and was gradually perfected throughout history. Taylor writes that "theoretical understanding aims at a disengaged perspective" (Taylor 1994: 89). We attempt not to project ourselves on to the world, but rather to understand the existing structures of the world. Taylor adds that "we come to distinguish this disengaged perspective from our ordinary stances of engagement, and that one values it as offering a higher- or in some sense superior sense of reality" (Taylor 1994: 89). This is exactly the sort of disengaged, disembodied notion of experience that is entailed in Descartes' methodology. I think that we have to be careful to register the benefits of a disengaged perspective. One such benefit is that it allows one to critically examine existing narratives.

There are two elements behind the rationale of bringing up Taylor's position. First, I wanted to show that the idea of instrumental rationality still has a great deal of force and currency. Peter Schouls, at the end of his book *Descartes and the Enlightenment*, explains one of the benefits of his study. He writes:

I trust that one fringe benefit of this study is that it provides a solid foundation for the deepening of criticism regarding both Descartes and the Enlightenment thinkers, who drew far more from his writings than most of their commentators have been willing to admit (Schouls 1989: 185).

Second, I wanted to denote the communitarian limitations of this line. I have defined communitarianism previously as closure of the interpretative horizon. Taylor sees a definite closure of interpretation with instrumental rationality, whereas I am arguing for an open-ended liberal notion of rationality. By bringing the conceptions and vocabularies of "liberal" and "communitarian" into my account, I am attempting to demonstrate the manner in which the human studies can enrich our understanding of the sciences.

I now want to turn to critiques of instrumental rationality from a feminist, Heideggerian perspective, and aboriginal perspectives.

Feminist scholarship, like Dilthey, has stressed the manner in which human experience is lived and embodied which corresponds to the notion of thick experience as found in the political philosophy literature (which I dealt with in the second chapter). The thrust of the feminist critique of instrumental rationality is to point out the limited manner in which "objectivity" has been defined. In the Greek Enlightenment and for a large part of the historical dialectic of the modern Enlightenment, women were excluded from definitions of rationality. As I have stated earlier, whenever some entities are excluded from definitions of rationality, there is a tendency for those in power to dominate the weaker members of the society. Women form such a group.

An important part of the feminist critique is the apparent rupture between theory and practice which feminism discerns. As many feminists see things, women's experience has been degraded because it does not fit into the main stream mode of rationality. Jean Grimshaw underlines the importance of the "insistence on the 'validity' of women's experience, linked often to a radical distrust of theory" (Grimshaw 1986: 81). Feminists share

with those in the hermeneutical camp an appreciation of lived experience and the practice of ideology. Bordo stresses the foundational role of the Cartesian project: "The model of knowledge that Descartes bequeathed to modern science, and that of which he is often explicitly described as the father, is based on clarity, certainty and detachment" (Bordo 1987: 14). Within the rubric of instrumental rationality, the self is detached from the world of objects which brings forth a universalistic and theoretical understanding of our place in the world.

Feminists hold that lived and embodied experience is ignored in the Cartesian project in favour of detached, thin experience. Feminists also criticize the disengaged perspective. Central to the Cartesian project is the distancing of the mind from the body which furnishes a theoretical mode of understanding the world. The subject removes himself or herself from his or her contingencies in order to obtain an objective perspective. Embodied experience is discounted in favour of an ideal mental, detached perspective. From a detached, Cartesian perspective, the Other becomes something to instrumentally manipulate. The earth becomes a set of objects which we can instrumentally manipulate for intersubjective interests. When groups of human beings and the earth are seen as Other, they are conceptualized as means rather than ends. A politics of hierarchy and Otherness has occurred historically between male and female, human beings and animals, and between dominant and minority cultures.

Grimshaw goes on to write: "One of the central themes of feminism has been the importance of women's experience, and one of its central enterprises has been to show how a great deal of male theorizing about women has tended to deny, invalidate or be unable to account for this experience" (Grimshaw 1986: 75). Throughout wide expanses of the discourse of western rationality, women have been marginalized in that discourse, and this marginalization has been taken to imply irrationality: "Commonly, women's perceptions of social reality have indeed been denied, suppressed or invalidated, and women have been

labelled 'deviant' or 'sick' if they refused to accept some dominant definition of their situation" (Grimshaw 1986: 83). Steven Fuller writes that a feminist critique of science will be particularly valuable because women "lack a clear vested interest in its maintenance" (Fuller 1993: 32). Susan Hekman (Hekman 1991) argues throughout her book *Gender and Knowledge* that women have been excluded from mainstream definitions of rationality. "Objective" talk grounds this exclusion in authority.

Many feminists attack the pretension of authority in science. Sandra Harding writes: "Objectivism insists that scientific claims can be produced only through dispassionate, disinterested, value-free, point-of-viewless, objective inquiry procedures, and that research generated or guided by feminist concerns obviously cannot meet such stands" (Harding 1990: 87). Feminists, like Dilthey, want to embody experience and attack the possibility of a detached perspective. Harding in "Feminist Justificatory Strategies" suggests quite strongly this position:

Once the Archimedean, transhistorical agent of knowledge is deconstructed into constantly shifting, wavering, recombining, historical groups, then the world that can be understood and navigated with the assistance of Archimedes's map of perfect perspective also disappears (Harding 1989: 199).

She links her position to Gadamer, Wittgenstein and Rorty (Harding 1989: 189). All of these thinkers attack the notion and possibility of universal narratives which discount local experience.

Thinkers such as Harding and many other feminists stress the concrete or lived notion of experience. Grimshaw contrasts concrete thinking with abstract thinking:

To look at a person or situation abstractly is to 'abstract'- that is to, discount or think away- the unique or particular features of that person or situation and see it as coming under some general concept or category. To judge concretely is to refuse to discount such unique or particular features (Grimshaw 1986: 204).

Grimshaw's alerts the reader to the possibility of the limited force of abstraction. Nonetheless,

abstraction can have a purpose: " 'Abstraction' ... is neither good nor bad" but rather it is defined contextually in terms of the "purpose" behind the abstraction (Grimshaw 1986: 213). As I have argued throughout this thesis, thick experience situates the self at a starting point, but we need to move beyond it to critically examine it. Thus, both abstract and concrete thinking are needed.

Helen E. Longino argues that we cannot ever avoid the notion of embodied experience:

We cannot restrict ourselves simply to the elimination of bias, but must expand our scope to include the detection of limiting and interpretive frameworks and the findings or construction of more appropriate frameworks ... Instead of remaining passive with respect to the data and what the data suggest, we can acknowledge our ability to affect the course of knowledge and fashion or favour research programs that are consistent with the values and the commitments we express in the rest of our lives. From this perspective, the idea of a value-free science is not just empty, but pernicious (Longino 1989: 212).

Thus, we can interpret the objective reality of science from a variety of perspectives and in the process engage in a hermeneutical conversation. Contra Harding, Longino is not arguing against the objectivity of science. Rather, Longino holds that science always occurs in a context and consequently is part of an interpretative horizon. Any interpretative horizon has a degree of thickness and is not ahistorical as strong Enlightenment narratives purport themselves to be. Longino does not hold that just because science is embedded in an interpretative horizon there are no constraints on it. Instead, she proposes that we understand the rationality of science as an open-ended activity.

With the emergence of a focus upon instrumental rationality, nature is seen as something to be exploited for the benefit of human beings. Susan Bordo calls it a "mechanistic reconstruction of the world" (Bordo 1987: 101). Frechet writes: "The work of Descartes and Bacon marks a turning point in the way we apprehend the world" (Frechet 1991: 206). She adds: "For Descartes, nature is no longer organic and alive; it is a machine of

matter and motion that obey mathematical laws" (Frechet 1991: 206). Instrumental rationality creates power: "Consequently, the purpose of science became not merely to know nature but also to gain power over it" (Frechet 1991: 206). Instrumental rationality provides us with a picture of philosophy which stresses a detached, theoretical perspective on the world which does not consider the moral significance of the Other.

Bordo argues that the medievals saw the cosmos as being feminine:

Both the mechanistic reconstruction of the world and the objectivist reconstruction of knowledge will be examined as embodying a common psychological structure: a fantasy of "rebirthing" self and the world, brought in to play the disintegration of the organic, female cosmos of the Middle Ages and Renaissance (Bordo 1987: 101).

But why does a more holistic understanding of the earth have to be defined as being feminine? Susan Bordo comes close to falling into the essentialist trap. If instrumental rationalism is, in fact, masculine, does this mean that men are also inherently this way? If so, how could men change? It seems that Bordo, at least on some level, is just reverting to Aristotelian essentialism. Like Aristotle, Bordo defines the two genders as having essential natures, but at the same time, she gives women a more favourable and desirable essence when compared to Aristotle.

Essentialism also implies determinism, and I think that it might be somewhat self-defeating for Bordo to call instrumental rationality *inherently* masculine. If her purpose is to provide a critique of the status quo, and to open up the interpretative horizon, then it seems that there should also be the hope that society's narrative could change. If things are *essentially* defined (as Bordo thinks they are), then I do not see how change could occur. By stressing the notion of essence, it seems that the interpretative horizon cannot be changed. By creatively manipulating the entrenched polarity between masculine and feminine, she nevertheless reinforces Charles Taylor's either/ or dichotomy in narrative construction.

Taylor's argues in his article "Rationality," that all contemporary narratives must come

to terms with science. In particular, Taylor argues that such narratives must espouse instrumental rationality. All narratives that do not endorse instrumental rationality must be rejected. Taylor understands modernity only from this perspective and sees, consequently, no redemptive aspects of other narratives (non-western ones), which could, in turn, supplement the contemporary discourse about rationality. Instead, all of the elements of other modes of discourse must be rejected. I, on the other hand, wish to argue that it is always possible to deconstruct a narrative and then to take elements from it which are strong and reject the rest. It seems that Bordo, like Taylor, wants to reject narratives *in toto*.

Denise Frechet also stresses the essentialistic understanding of gender: "Mathematics becomes a synonym for superpower and therefore is linked with the masculinity of those already privileged" (Frechet 1991: 207). She also writes: "The congruence with masculine modes of thinking has consequences for women, for science, and for society" (Frechet 1991: 211). Like Bordo she is rather extreme in her views and sees modern science as a product of "uterus envy" (Frechet 1991: 210) and she speaks as well of "classical science as modern man's phallic ritual" (Frechet 1991: 210). Bordo echoes Frechet's point: "Cartesian objectivism and mechanism ... should be understood as a *reaction-formation* a denial of the 'separation anxiety' described above, facilitated by an aggressive intellectual *flight* from the female cosmos and 'feminine' orientation towards the world" (Bordo 1987: 100). But the move from a general critique of objective claims of science to gender essentialism is too sudden. Do experiments which developed electricity demonstrate "uterus envy"? When Einstein developed the theory of relativity was he guilty of "uterus envy"? Some feminist polemic oversimplifies complex problems.

If the narrative of instrumental rationality is to be expanded and redefined, there must be commensurability while cogently pointing out the need to rethink mores. Narratives must

be able to exchange elements with one another. Descartes, like many other Enlightenment thinkers, saw the earth as something which could be instrumentally manipulated. The earth was a machine. Bordo stresses, and I am in full agreement with her, the intersubjective limitations of instrumental rationality:

If the transition from the Middle Ages to early modernity can be looked on as a kind of protracted birth, from which the human being emerges as a decisively separate entity, no longer continuous with the universe with which it has once shared a soul, so the possibility of objectivity, strikingly, is conceived by Descartes as a kind of *rebirth*, on one's own terms, this time (Bordo 1987: 97).

The manner of understanding reality was framed decisively in terms of human interests.

Bordo argues that the "feminine" understanding of nature is superior to the "masculine" understanding of nature. Grimshaw, contra Bordo, argues against "an assumption of separate male and female realities' " (Grimshaw 1986: 82). While Grimshaw holds that there are different ways of understanding reality, she still does not cast the pluralism of interpreting reality in terms of gender. Keller similarly argues that a distinction between "(male) objectivity" and "(female) subjectivity" which "denies the possibility of a mediation between the two" (Keller 1989: 179). In her insightful article, "Feminism and Science," Keller takes a hermeneutical approach by seeing science as an object which can be interpreted from many perspectives. Rather than rejecting the notion of objectivity as Bordo does, Keller wants to "reconceptualize objectivity" (Keller 1989: 179). A reconceptualization of reality must take into account feminism. The incorporation of lived experience forces a fusion between theory and practice. The relationship between theory and practice shows the limitations of the dominant narrative of rationality as it points to its finitude and limitations.

Martin Heidegger, one of the strongest critics of instrumental rationality, offers a similar critique of the objective pretensions of modern science. Like Bordo, Heidegger attacks the disembodied and detached mode of thinking which began in early modernity and which

prevails in contemporary discourse about instrumental rationality. Heidegger has attempted to deconstruct the Enlightenment ideals of truth and objectivity. His phenomenological-hermeneutical approach attempts to discern the multiple layerings in which reality (he uses the term "Being") can be interpreted. One of the main themes of Heidegger's work is that the understanding of Being has been fragmented and compartmentalized. Such understanding is obvious in Descartes' writings. Descartes conceives of knowledge as that which can be clearly and distinctly known. Later, I will examine how this fragmentation of knowledge is presented in the three Kantian critiques. Also, both Kant and Descartes stress disembodied and thin experience.

Heidegger stresses, in contrast to the disengaged perspective of Kant, Descartes and Taylor, the embodied nature of our experience. He writes: "Being in-the-world is essentially care" (Heidegger 1967: 237). Being does not exist "out there." Rather we come to know Being through our embodied and historical experience. Because Being is revealed to *Dasein* (Heidegger's term for human beings) through time, different phenomenological possibilities of objects are presented to us. Heidegger writes: "Dasein is an entity for which, in its Being, the Being is an issue" (Heidegger 1967: 236). *Dasein* refers to the human subject. Being, while it does have an objective or independent existence from us (Being is an object which preexists interpretation), is constantly being framed by our finite interpretation. Being is always approached from a certain limited perspective. Every perspective, however, has constraints and limitations and conceptual holes which arise within any interpretative horizon.

Central to Heidegger's position is the idea that Being is always interpreted within a particular horizon (in this sense he continues the hermeneutical tradition of Dilthey). It is not that the interpretative horizon only refers to symbols within itself. Rather, the interpretative horizon is a perspectival, finite grasp of Being. Being is the set of objects in the world which

préexist the act of interpretation. Heidegger's claim is that the dominant mode of rationality in our age is instrumental rationality. Human society and the earth itself have been completely transformed by this mode of rationality. Reality and Being are consequently filtered through this interpretative horizon and provide the backdrop of our deliberations about the historicity which surrounds us. While Heidegger holds that all experience is thick, he also maintains that experience of modernity has been "framed" [literal translation of the German term *Gestellen*] by instrumental rationality. I will elaborate on this point later.

Traditionally, liberalism has been concerned only with intersubjective conceptions of the Good that have reference to human beings. I argue that the environmental crisis which faces us presses constraints on our conception of the Good. The environmental crisis functions in a similar manner to Habermas' notion of a legitimacy crisis, which forces a critical examination of the dominant narrative. The dominant narrative of our age is instrumentality and it must be both deconstructed and critically examined. The constraint is not that of idealism, but rather of the material conditions imposed by the environmental crisis. We live in a world whose existence is threatened. We have been extremely alienated from the earth through the explosion of technology. We live in an age where our ozone layer is being continually depleted. Consequently, it seems that the earth can no longer support the interpretation of reality with the exclusive focus on human priorities that it once did. The "progress" promised by the scientific revolution is being severely challenged. The environmental crisis, which is the embodiment of the theory and practise of science, demonstrates the need to rethink our place in history.

Heidegger's approach is different than Rorty's. Rorty and many feminist thinkers decry theory as alienating. They subvert the dominant ideology, which degrades the lived experience of marginalized groups. Inevitably, the inner contradictions of the dominant

narrative (conceptual holes) become apparent. The project of theorists such as Rorty and feminists such as Bordo is to challenge the hegemony that a certain ideology has over contemporary discourse. In the case of both of these thinkers, the target is the Enlightenment's discourse about universality. Whereas Rorty distrusts the role of theory, Heidegger's fundamental task of restoring a holistic ontology demonstrates his attempt to deconstruct (through the practice of theoretical examination) the dominant narrative of our age. It is through his critical examination of lived experience practice that Heidegger differs from some other thinkers whose primary focus is upon lived experience scholarship. Instead of merely describing the practice of technology, Heidegger critically examines technology and grapples with the problems posed by modernity. Instrumental rationality dominates the discourse of modernity.

By stressing holism, one comes to challenge the climate of Otherness and alienation created by modernity. By Otherness, I mean the rupturing between the subject and object. Heidegger attempts to bridge the gap between the subject and object through the hermeneutical act of interpretation. With Heidegger's ontology, there is a link between Dasein and the world (or the field of Being). Dasein is an extension of Being itself and not something autonomous of reality. The early Heidegger used the process of deconstruction to attempt to discern a fundamental ontology (Heidegger 1967: 41-49). He attempted to stand outside of the metaphysical tradition of western thought. In chapter one, I analyzed this to some extent, looking at his relation to Heracleitus.

The later Heidegger uses this same process of deconstruction to critically examine the historical thickness of the experience of modernity. Unlike others in the hermeneutical tradition, such as Rorty and Gadamer, Heidegger stresses the relationship of the modern interpretative horizon to materiality (i.e. the constraining force of the natural sciences). The

difference between the modern Enlightenment and the Greek Enlightenment is the manner in which reality was materially and instrumentally manipulated. As I stated earlier, the Greek Enlightenment was more a matter of a revolution of ideas. The modern Enlightenment, on the other hand, brought forth science which has irrevocably changed our understanding of reality and has increased our ability to change the material conditions around us. The increase in wealth brought about by the practice of science, technology, has undoubtedly influenced the emergence of liberalism and the shattering of the older political order because of the emergence of new modes of production.

The essence of the Heideggerian project is to rethink fundamental ontology. He sees Plato and Aristotle, both of whom are essentialists, as laying the foundations for the manner in which we think about Being. Ballard writes:

... Heidegger reads Western history as a choice dating from Socrates and Plato, to regard man as the decisive factor in being. This decision remained for a long time more or less implicit until it emerged as the *cogito* in the philosophy of Descartes, as the I-principle (the "I think ..." of Kant, and as the Romantic belief in the infinite productiveness and self-creativity of the ego) (Ballard 1970: 61).

The *cogito* provided the foundation for the Cartesian system. Later, I will discuss how Kant incorporates this into his system. Kant moves the emphasis from the objectivity of the *cogito*, that Descartes struggled for, to a radical intersubjective interpretation of knowledge. Kant marks an important turning point because he rejects the importance of externality and materiality of reality. Heidegger's critique of instrumental rationality attacks the objective pretensions of intersubjective reason.

Heidegger further characterizes the manner in which Being has been depicted in the Western tradition: "... a dogma has been developed which not only declares the question of Being to be superfluous, but sanctions its complete neglect" (Heidegger 1967: 21). Instead of trying to see the whole picture and to engage in holistic thinking (as found in feminist thinking

and aboriginal philosophy), we, especially in our age of instrumental rationality, tend to compartmentalize things and concepts. The tendency towards reductionistic thinking is found in Descartes' notion of clear and distinct ideas, with a corresponding stress on seeing mathematics as paradigmatic of rational activity: "The Cartesian procedure is to presuppose that any object (body) belongs to the mathematical and objective world and can be exhaustively known only within it" (Ballad 1970: 43). Ballad adds: "The technological interpretation of knowledge follows quite naturally to men of *Gestell*, men who are possessed by the Cartesian motive to become masters and possessors of nature" (Ballad 1970: 47).

The German term *Gestell* refers to a framing of our interpretative discourse which stresses instrumental rationality. *Gestell* means a "framing" and replaces the metaphor of interpretative horizon with the metaphor of an interpretative framework. A framework, as opposed to an interpretative horizon, implies an ossification of a conceptual scheme. In this view, technology becomes the manner in which we frame and understand reality:

"Technology is a method for calling forth and transforming the stock of reality according to will" (Ballad 1970: 48). Science, in a sense, is a sort of Nietzschean will to power and, ironically loses its status of objectivity and is used to interpret reality for the advantage of those who wish to instrumentally manipulate it. Instead of being objective, science merely generates new possibilities for human exploitation.

Scientific rationality is not the only means of understanding Being. While scientific rationality is a useful way, it does not exhaust all of the phenomenal possibilities of objects. The manner in which we utilize different tools in the world, including the task of art making, determines the manner in which we comport with Being: "It is in this process of the use of equipment that we actually encounter the character of equipment" (Heidegger 1977a: 162). Equipment is anything which allows and affords Dasein the possibility of constructing a

conceptual map with which to interpret Being.

Jürgen Habermas (1975) has demonstrated that the instrumental manner of comporting with Being has manifested itself in the manner in which western democracies function. Knowledge becomes very fragmented. Different bureaucrats manipulate certain fragments of the whole picture, which threatens to evolve into tyranny and could ultimately undermine democracy. Modern states adopt this instrumental rationality and knowledge fails to get distributed to the citizenry. The free interchange of knowledge ceases to be a free interchange of knowledge. Being is sectioned off and divided into parts which prevents the emergence of a holistic. A fractured relationship exists not only within the microcosm of bureaucracy, but also within the macrocosm of society. Alienation encroaches and governments lose their legitimacy. The relationship of scientific, instrumental rationality to political practice is pervasive and profound.

As I have already noted, Taylor and Descartes decisively reject contemplative metaphysics. While both Descartes and Taylor claim this to be objective, feminist philosophy engages in a "hermeneutics of suspicion." Bordo shows us that Enlightenment thinking separated human beings from nature in the same manner that happened in the Greek Enlightenment with the distinction between *nomos* and *physis*. I agree with this, but I disagree that this process is an inherently male one. However, feminist thinkers, along with Heidegger, attempt to deconstruct the objective pretensions of instrumental rationality. Heidegger's notion of Being-in-the-World has much in common with the feminist (and hermeneutical) notion of lived experience. According to these models, we understand reality in the context of the interpretative horizon within which reality is interpreted.

Heidegger's return to the question of Being invites a more holistic perspective. Like Herder, Heidegger stresses the importance of history. Ballad writes:

Being is accessible to man only in time. The opening prepared for the emergence of beings (and for man himself understood as a being) is historical; in different epochs, different aspects of being have become disclosed. Correlatively, other aspects have remained hidden. The reign of Gestell in the modern world, for example, would conceal as much as it reveals. Thus, all disclosing of possibilities is also a closing of them off, a concealing (Ballad 1970: 50).

Our understanding of the world and reality is a historical process.

In "The Question Concerning Technology," Heidegger takes issue with the extreme tendencies of instrumental rationality. Heidegger takes history seriously, and examines the problem of technology in terms of the context of modernity. He writes: "When we respond to this essence, we shall be able to experience the technological within its bounds" (Heidegger 1977b: 287). By exploring the practice of technology, Heidegger argues for a fusion between theory and practice which would aid a movement towards the resolution of the crisis of modernity. He writes: "Technology is not equivalent to the essence of technology" (Heidegger 1977b: 287). Technology is not a Platonic essence for Heidegger. We are, for him, completely enmeshed in a historical context in which technology grounds our interpretation of Being. The critical examination of this historical context is a theoretical engagement, but it is based on the explicit engagement with the concrete environment of our age. Heidegger's reliance on the fusion of practice and theory relates his thinking to feminist philosophy.

Heidegger attempts to define the meaning of technology: "The manufacture and utilization of equipment, tools, and machines, the manufactured and used things themselves, and the needs that they serve, all belong to what technology is" (Heidegger 1977b: 288). Scientific rationality has decisively framed the manner in which we envision the objectivity of reality. For this model, rationality is conceived in instrumental terms, and technology is seen as a means of bettering our lives and as a means of reducing the misery of human existence. Descartes articulates the idea that scientific methodology is a salvation. We move towards a perfected state of material mastery. Heidegger writes: "The current conception of technology,

according to which it is a means of human activity, can therefore be called the instrumental and anthropological definition of technology" (1977b: 288.). Instrumental rationality is an interpretation of objective reality which tries to present itself both as authoritative and absolute.

Descartes and Taylor hold that the instrumental paradigm of scientific rationality is more "objective" and more adequate than other interpretations of Being. Heidegger, feminist thinkers, and aboriginal philosophers all point out the limitations of scientific rationality—namely, its focus upon clarity merely in small units, universal reason, antihistorical reason, and the alleged ideal of the thinness of experience. All of these critiques challenge the self-professed hegemony over the truth of scientific, instrumental rationality. Heidegger stresses the decisive manner in which scientific instrumentality has framed our understanding of objective reality:

The instrumental definition of technology is indeed so uncannily correct that it even holds for modern technology, of which, in other respects, we maintain with some justification that it is, in contrast to the older handwork technology, something completely different and therefore new (1977b: 288).

In modern times, there have been profound changes in the modes of production. The material conditions of human lives have been transformed. Because of the radical transformation of material conditions, the modern Enlightenment has had a much more global and "totalization of consciousness" (Adorno's term) than the Greek Enlightenment did on the people of its time.

Descartes stresses the importance of gaining mastery of the material world in order to improve human life. This element in Descartes' philosophy is argued persuasively by Peter Schouls in his book *Descartes and the Enlightenment* (Schouls 1989). A bettering of material conditions would improve human liberty. Heidegger provides us with a sketch of this worldview: "Everything depends on our manipulating technology in the proper manner as a means. We will, as we say, 'get technology spiritually in hand.' We will master it. The will to

mastery becomes all the more urgent the more technology threatens to slip from human control" (Heidegger 1977b: 289). We can see, perhaps even more clearly than Heidegger the environmental damage that instrumental rationality has brought. We are at a crisis point in terms of the condition of the environment. The devastation of the environment which stems from the explosion of instrumental rationality, challenges the notion of "success" in this paradigm of rationality. The possible truth is that we may have lost control of technology.

Heidegger stresses throughout his writings that the instrumental manner of understanding technology is contingent and by no means necessary: "Technology is a way of revealing. If we give heed to this, then another whole realm of technology will open up for us. It is the realm of revealing, i.e., of truth" (Heidegger 1977b: 294). Heidegger sees technology, and by extension instrumental rationality, merely as one way human beings can live and understand the world. The interpretative framework of instrumental rationality grounds our interpretation of Being. In order to extend the manner in which we understand the world, we must, and can, transcend the limitations of instrumental rationality. We can choose another path within this horizon. Thus we do not step outside of history. We can think outside of the existing interpretative horizon.

Instead of relying on scientific, instrumental rationality, Heidegger advocates the use of other paradigms as well. In his essay, "The Origin of a Work of Art," Heidegger advocates that art should be taken seriously as a mode of rationality. Gadamer also for this position (Gadamer 1975: 5-152). Art, like different historical periods, frames reality from different perspectives. Relativism is not implied in this for two reasons: (1) the existence of a common object namely reality (Being), and 2) the means of understanding (second level patterns of narrative construction) this common object exists transhistorically and transculturally. Peter Winch, on the other hand, does not have an overriding concept such as Being which could

unite all of the different aspects of interpretation. Winch runs into commensurability problems because he provides no evaluative basis within which different narratives can be compared. Essentially, Being functions as a metanarrative which links various narratives together for Heidegger.

The notion of Being as a metanarrative can be integrated into political philosophy. Heidegger states that instrumental, scientific rationality is the historical horizon wherein we are presently interpreting Being. He is engaged in the quintessential activity of liberalism- *he is thinking outside of the dominant interpretative horizon of instrumental rationality*. He is attempting to change the interpretative horizon of our age through his philosophy. At this point, I wish to turn directly to liberalism and demonstrate that the antinomies of the Enlightenment can be dealt with in the domain of human studies.

One can readily discern the manner in which the Enlightenment ideals were translated into moral terms. Kant is undoubtedly a major figure in the thought of the modern Enlightenment. A consideration of his general position would supplement the earlier analysis of Kymlicka who I take to be a Kantian liberal. It would be fruitful to examine the manner in which his thought grapples with the dialectical tensions of the two poles of Enlightenment. There is a profound paradox (namely the paradox of Enlightenment) at the heart of the Kantian enterprise: on the one hand he uses causation to justify a sort of epistemological determinism (i.e. knowledge is causally produced) as in the first Critique: the domain of pure reason, whereas in the second Critique, that of practical reason, "everything ... is connected with free will" (Kant 1969: 455). Kant develops his conception of the will in *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*. "The will is thought of as a faculty of determining itself to action in accordance with the conception of certain laws. Such a faculty can be found only in rational beings" (Kant 1949a: 85). While on the one hand he dismisses transcendental arguments

(among which he includes arguments about free will) because they cannot be verified with empirical evidence, he also needs the notion of freedom (which is according to his terminology based on a transcendental argument) for his whole ethical system.

Kant's project also contains within itself the positive pole of the Enlightenment. This is especially the case in the first Critique. Scientific methodology relies heavily on the notion of causation which in turn grounds *a priori* knowledge. Kant writes: "All changes take place according to the law of the connection of Cause and Effect" (Kant 1969: 148). Kant writes that "the principle of causality instructs us as to the mode of obtaining from that which happens a determinate empirical conception" (Kant 1969: 212). Kant equates the "maxims of freedom" with "laws of nature" (Kant 1949b: 116). Kant links the notions of freedom, rationality and will: "It is a rule characterized by an 'ought' which expresses the objective necessitation of the act and indicates that, if reason completely determined the will, the action would without exception take place according to that rule" (Kant 1969b: 131). Kant imports the notion of necessity into his conception of *a priori*:

Now, in the first place, if we have a proposition which contains the idea of necessity in its very conception, it is a judgment *a priori*, if, moreover, it is not derived from any other proposition, unless from one equally involving the idea of necessity, it is absolutely *a priori* (Kant 1969: 27).

Kant stresses the universal and objective manner in which we understand reality: "For this conception demands that something, A, should be of such a nature, that something else, B, should follow from it necessarily and according to absolutely universal law" (Kant 1969: 90). The central role given to causation demonstrates the impact that the natural sciences had upon the human sciences. Objective constraints are put on to the object domain of the natural sciences. The methodology of the natural sciences stressed the importance of necessity which in turn implies the notion of causation. The categorical imperative was a *necessary* product of universal reason. Universal moral laws existed outside of history and

were not bound by the contingencies of any historical community. The methodology of Kant could be characterized as detached and disengaged because the self was not situated.

Kant and Descartes advocate a liberation from the drudgery of the past (I have already outlined this in the case of Descartes earlier in the chapter). In "What is Enlightenment?," Kant uses the metaphor in a similar manner to Descartes: "ENLIGHTENMENT is man's release from his self-incurred tutelage." (Kant 1949c: 286). He adds:

For there will always be some independent thinkers, even among the established guardians of the great masses, who, after throwing off the yoke of tutelage from their own shoulders, will disseminate the spirit of the rational appreciation of both their own worth and every man's vocation for thinking (Kant 1949c: 287).

In general, the process of Enlightenment allows one to be free from the limitations of the past. Enlightenment moves humanity from childhood to adulthood:

... we have clear indications that the field has now been opened wherein men may freely deal with these things and that the obstacles to general enlightenment or the release from self-imposed tutelage are gradually being reduced (Kant 1949c: 292).

Kant's work documents the impact that the emerging natural sciences had upon moral philosophy. Furthermore, his work is an attempt to solve the paradox of Enlightenment.

Kant, like Descartes, stresses the pivotal role of consciousness: "The I *think* must accompany all my representations ... the representation would either be impossible, or at least be, in relation to me, nothing" (Kant 1969: 94). In another passage Kant writes: "... the proposition *I think* ... contains the form of every judgment in general, and is the constant accompaniment of all the categories ..." (Kant 1969: 237). There is no external justification of truth. Rather "the world is a sum of phenomena ..." (Kant 1969: 401).

The mind processes information, according to Kant, by proceeding from sensation to the understanding, and to Reason (the highest level of abstraction, which contrasts with a more embodied account of experience). One type of transcendental argument is not sound, because it is not based on empirical data: "... they do not proceed upon empirical principles"

(Kant 1969: 358). Kant writes that "the senses represent objects *as they appear*" and "the understanding *as they are*" (Kant 1969: 190). Both are limited to the framework of a subject and there is no objective and external justification for either. He adds: "Understanding accordingly limits sensibility, without at the same enlarging its own field" (Kant 1969: 205). The Understanding's only "occupation is the connection of experiences" (Kant 1969: 374). Like the sophists, Kant moved arguments away from cosmological arguments (Kant 1969: 260-281, 342-372) to themes of coherence or intersubjective concern.

Kant writes: "Philosophy must therefore assume that no true contradiction will be found between freedom and natural necessity in the same human actions, for it cannot give up the concept of nature any more than that of freedom" (Kant 1949b: 110). Kant stresses the paradox between the notions of freedom and necessity:

Obviously ... the separation of his causality (his will) from all natural laws of the world of sense in one and the same subject is a contradiction, but this disappears when they reconsider and confess, as is reasonable, that behind the appearances things-in-themselves must stand as their hidden ground and that we cannot expect the laws of the activity of these grounds to be the same as those under which their appearances stand (Kant 1949b: 113).

Kant demarcates (in an anticipation of hermeneutics) the distinction between the natural and human sciences. The object of nature corresponds to the positive pole of Enlightenment, whereas, the object of freedom corresponds to the negative pole of Enlightenment:

The legislation of human reason, or philosophy, has two objects- Nature and Freedom, and thus contains not only the laws of nature, but also those of ethics, at first in two separate systems, which, finally, merge into one grand philosophical system of cognition. The philosophy of Nature relates to that *which is*, that of Ethics to that which *ought to be* (Kant 1969: 475).

Both of these notions require the notion of necessity. For Kant, the natural world has a predetermined order. Furthermore, while the human construction of moral laws and practices might be incomplete. There is a duty [*Pflicht*] in determining the correct moral ideals.

In *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant articulates a universalistic understanding of moral laws (he applies the same criteria to the epistemological process of

causation). Kant's stress on causation points to the degree to which the human sciences had been influenced by the project of the natural sciences. The categorical imperative imports the notion of universal reason and necessity into the framework of the human sciences. While there are certainly differences between the two object domains, nonetheless there are second level principles common to both which bind them together. Contrary to the above, the object domains of nature and freedom seem to be interconnected in Kant's system. The categorical imperative is a reworking of the ageless golden rule: "Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law" (Kant 1949a: 80). A sense of necessity pervades moral laws. I share with Kant the appeal to universal reason (I use the term metanarrative). The major difference is that I stress thick experience, whereas, he stresses thin experience. In the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant writes: "Act by a maxim which involves its own universal validity for every rational being" (Kant 1949b: 95). He adds: "But since moral laws should hold for every rational being as such, the principles must be derived from the universal concept of a rational being generally" (Kant 1949a: 71).

I wish now to turn again to Rawls because of his prominence in contemporary political philosophic literature. Rawls' embodies some of the same dialectical tensions of Enlightenment as Kant. I discussed Rawls at length in the second chapter, but I think it is important to place him directly in relation to third chapter themes as well. Rawls, like Kant, has a mountain-top ideal of rationality which emphasizes the universalistic ideal of Enlightenment. He asserts that we can survey history by detaching ourselves from history through abstraction (similar to Taylor's "disengaged perspective"). In Rawls, the abstraction occurs behind the veil of ignorance. Rawls writes: "The concept of the original position, as I shall refer to it, is that of the most philosophically favoured interpretation of this initial choice situation for the purposes of a theory of justice" (Rawls 1971: 18). The position is considered

to be the most favoured position because the subjects behind the veil of ignorance do not bring any interests with them. They are detached and can observe matters from an "objective perspective." The aim of the original position is chiefly to detach people from their interests and prejudices; this aim requires a commensurability between interpretative frameworks.

The task of the subjects behind the veil of ignorance, in the original position, is to "objectively interpret" the ideal conditions of justice. Rawls writes: "The aim is to rule out those principles that it would be rational to propose for acceptance, however little chance of success, only if one knew certain things that are irrelevant from the standpoint of justice" (Rawls 1971: 18). The principles of justice that Rawls articulates are principles which exist independently of *particular* human communities. Through the *reflective equilibrium*, we can "discover" the "objective" principles of justice.

Rawls continues: "To represent the desired restrictions one imagines a situation in which everyone is deprived of this sort of information. One excludes the knowledge of those contingencies which set men at odds and allows them to be guided by their prejudices" (Rawls 1971: 19). But it is this engagement and lived experience which makes political life possible. These contingencies ground our existence in historical communities. We do not understand reality from an objective viewpoint, but rather we understand reality from the perspective of our interpretative horizon. Rawls writes: "Somehow we must nullify the effects of specific contingencies which put men at odds and tempt them to exploit social and natural circumstances to their own advantages" (Rawls 1971: 136). Within this context, Rawls, in his book, *A Theory of Justice*, rests upon a strong theory/ practice dichotomy. While he articulates a theory of justice, he seemingly ignores the manner in which liberal justice has been practiced in liberal democracies in Western Europe and North America.

Georgia Warnke is careful to note the change in Rawls' thinking after 1980. Warnke

observes that the later Rawls "interprets his own *A Theory of Justice* so that the conception of justice he articulates there can encompass communitarian concerns with history and political participation" (Warnke 1990: 155). In *The Theory of Justice*, Rawls is making a somewhat Kantian, universalistic claim about morality. Warnke rightly argues that Rawls should take into account the thickness of our experience in constructing a political ontology. Unfortunately, Rawls ultimately concedes far too much to the communitarian camp. While Rawls rightly assumes that there is content and thickness to our experience, his argument becomes circular because he "justifies" liberalism merely by saying that it is the dominant contemporary discourse. Rawls was arguing essentially that our practice of liberal culture need not be defended by metaphysical positions, but rather it needs to be defined only in terms of social practice. Warnke attacks the foundationalism of the earlier Rawls:

From a hermeneutic point of view, the attempt to find some unconditioned "Archimedean point" for assessing the norms and principles of a given society fails to account for the limits of its own historical perspective (Warnke 1990: 137).

My position incorporates elements from both the 1971 Rawls and the post-1980 Rawls. I hold that there are transhistorical truths, or metanarratives, but at the same time I hold that the only way we can know them is by beginning with embodied experience. But I add the following stipulation: embodied experience must be put to critical examination. Also, I hold that there can be a theoretical foundation for liberalism. Liberalism can be viewed as arising from *a priori* structures of human understanding. These *a priori* structures, however, will generate different variations and configurations. I have tried to use hermeneutics to foundationally ground liberalism. I will talk later about Habermas' important conception of "communicative discourse" which allows individuals using different narratives to communicate with each other. In such a way, the possibilities of human discourse become enlarged, while still relying on a strong sense of commensurability between different narratives.

Taylor's argument for instrumental rationality reduces the possibility of a mutually enriching communication between members of different interpretative communities. The Azande practice of examining intestines for "witch substance" creates a straw man for Taylor to attack. The example of Azande witchcraft, which has been trotted out in the literature, is misleading and simplistic. I would like to use the philosophy of the Indian people to generate a more useful example. The environmental ethic of Indian people is one of attunement with nature. I will return to Indian philosophy shortly. For the present time, I would like to register the point that we cannot merely seek an instrumental domination of nature, but we must instead seek to live in harmony with nature. We must not seek to use technology to harness the resources merely because we have the ability. Ethical considerations must take into account the earth and conceptions of the Good must move beyond mere intersubjective interests.

Taylor is right to say that all contemporary discourse must come to terms with science. But it does not follow, as Taylor would have it, in his essay "Rationality," that instrumental rationality is an improvement over other modes of rationality. The environmental crisis presents itself as a powerful counter-example to Taylor's and Descartes' instrumental conception of rationality. The results of applying Enlightenment ideal of progress have severely undermined the validity of talking about technological "successes." Is modern science "successful" when the physical and material existence of the earth is threatened? Taylor's criteria of rationality could also be used as material for political debate. Let us consider the example of the proposed hydro "development" project in Quebec. A member of the Quebec government could attempt to cite Taylor and Descartes to support the view that western instrumental philosophy is superior to the attunement philosophy of the Cree. I do not think that we have to choose between the two perspectives. Rather, I think we can

engage in communicative discourse and take the best from both life-worlds.

Aboriginal people, like people of all cultures, have every reason to engage in a hermeneutics of suspicion (i.e. a critical hermeneutical interpretation). Because of the disastrous effects that instrumental, scientific rationality has had upon their lives, aboriginal people are well-positioned to critically examine the practice of Enlightenment ideals. The exploitation of land by "advanced" civilizations has often meant their displacement. They are forced to think outside of the dominant narrative, and can point to conceptual holes and contradictions in the system. Aboriginal people, who are living in squalor throughout this country, see Enlightenment ideals as mere illusions. Take freedom, for example. How can one be free in poverty? Indians have real reasons to doubt the "progress of Reason" and the instrumental approach to rationality. This mode of rationality has been used to subjugate Indian nations. For aboriginal people, "equality" is also an illusion. How can one be "equal" when one's culture, language, religion have been systematically attacked? These experiences allow them to think outside of the system of scientific, instrumental rationality.

Douglas Cardinal attempts to resolve the conflicts in the confrontation between the two interpretative horizons. Cardinal sees the same sort of totalizing effect upon rationality that technology has in the same way as Heidegger. He speaks of the dominant society as being "enslaved by its technology" (Cardinal 1977: 44). Technology is "transforming everything" and "destroying everything" (Cardinal 1977: 44). There is a neglect of the "subtle balances of nature" (Cardinal 1977: 44). He adds: "This system destroys individual sensitivity because in the dominating technological society, one loses sight of the natural whole" (Cardinal 1977: 76).

The same instrumental rationality was used to subjugate Indians:

Their crimes against our people make it necessary for them to degrade us, to program their society to believe that we are ignorant savages thereby rationalizing and perpetuating their

abuse. Since we are less than men in their eyes, their conscience is eased and they feel exonerated in their past and present treatment of our people (Cardinal 1977: 45).

Melnyk writes:

It is the dialectical irony of history that the people of the land, who under white domination have become the wretched of the earth, should in preserving their ancient culture lay the basis for a new relationship with this land which far surpasses that of the white conquerors (Melnyk 1977: 11).

The subjugation of Indians and the subjugation of the earth itself point to the inner contradictions of the Enlightenment. Cardinal writes: "Our being erodes the foundation of the dominant society's materialist and capitalist values, so it has made every effort to destroy us" (Cardinal 1977: 68). Because Europeans believe they have the true narrative, this legitimates (to some extent) their oppression and domination of aboriginal people. Their assumption of superiority fuses the theoretical aspirations of science and Enlightenment, namely objectivity and neutrality, with the historical practice of these ideals.

Melnyk characterizes the philosophy of instrumentality in the following manner: "The world of objects is a world out-there. It is a world built on separation and the proliferation of things" (Melnyk 1977: 13). There are two parts of this. First, there is a separation between human beings and the rest of existence. Cardinal writes: "Technological civilization tries to impose the mind or ego on everything around" (Cardinal 1977: 25).

Melnyk writes:

In such a universe, a man-made universe, where primacy in life belongs to man, man becomes an object, a thing out-there and life becomes a thing out there to be manipulated. Being disappears and is replaced by the life-less thing. Ultimately life becomes a man-dependent thing (Melnyk 1977: 13).

Melnyk adds: "Man operates as creator more than life" (Melnyk 1977; 13).

Second, Cardinal writes that the "system of technology is a monument to the 'I' " (Cardinal 1977: 114). Here Cardinal is talking about the context of modernity of which he is also a part. He writes: "Technological civilization tries to impose the mind or the ego on

everything around" (Cardinal 1977: 25). Melnyk writes: "Cardinal calls this society the society of the ego-man. The ego-man is the man of the conquering intellect or 'whiteman's knowing.' This knowing is not holistic" (Melnyk 1977: 13).

There is an attempt to divide up the world. Melnyk adds: "Its main attribute is domination through division. When Cardinal calls this the 'dominant society,' he is not only referring to the oppression of Indian culture, he calls attention to the main mode of being of this society which is mastery" (Melnyk 1977: 13). Melnyk also writes: "The goal of this immigrant culture is power over nature" (Melnyk 1977: 13). Mastery occurs both in socio-economic terms and also in the alienation from the earth. Both move against the classical liberal ideal of equality.

Instrumental philosophy is alienating:

When Cardinal talks about the immigrant culture imposed here as "alien", he is not only stating a sociological fact but is stating that the essence of the present society is "alienation." This accusation is fundamental to the Indian critique of civilization in general and technological society in particular (Melnyk 1977: 14).

The essence of Indian philosophy affords the possibility of restoring the relationship between entities. Also, it creates the grounds of a radical philosophy for democracy and equality between people and the earth:

The Indian vision offers this society relationships it does not have. It offers it the possibility of de-alienating itself, of no longer being in an immigrant culture. It offers a unity with the land impossible in our society. It offers an end to the ideology of domination and a radical new democracy (Melnyk 1977: 20).

Melnyk adds: "It comes from a philosophy of radical human equality with life, a world without hierarchy" (Melnyk 1977: 15). We must rethink the exclusively human focus of instrumental rationality and traditional liberalism. While it may be difficult to conceive of equality between human beings and the earth, we must at the very least take the well-being of the earth into account when we construct conceptual schemes which articulate an interpretation of the

Good.

Cardinal's philosophy sets forth an open-ended conception of rationality which links technology with traditional Indian philosophy. This may be illustrated with a discussion of a building he was designing: "Only openness in the planning and development of the College will ensure the breath of community spirit in it. The plan will centre on concepts of freedom to grow, on concepts of evolution rather than an inflexible, dictatorial plan difficult to modify" (Cardinal 1977: 36). He adds: "The form is alive, a living plant-like growth" (Cardinal 1977: 36). Cardinal expands this by saying that "it will branch out living spaces which will follow the natural terrain so that the human community and the natural environment grow with one another" (Cardinal 1977: 37). He characterizes this mode of philosophy by the following assertion: "The design cries out for growth, expansion, innovation and change. It breathes freedom. Like a plant it needs only nourishment to thrive and develop" (Cardinal 1977: 38). Cardinal, furthermore, contrasts this with other modes of architecture: "The Renaissance-conceived temples of today in which each facade has been 'balanced' in a system of aesthetics of which the Greeks would be proud offer stubborn resistance to modification" (Cardinal 1977: 36).

Cardinal's Indian philosophy is holistic and in many ways close to that of Heidegger: "It is a vision that is more about 'being' than 'making' " (Melnyk 1977: 14). Technological knowledge in and of itself does not justify the narrative of instrumental rationality. I raise similar objections to instrumental rationality as I did to Rorty's liberalism. The existence of a practice does not in itself give it normative validity. Rather, the only way in which to establish the normative validity of a narrative is to critically examine it and compare it to other narratives. Indian philosophy proposes a more integrated understanding between the self and the earth. Melnyk notes: "For Cardinal, the Indian sense of reality is a dramatic consciousness

of the organic" (Melnyk 1977: 10). Cardinal's position also has importance for environmental ethics: "Knowledge was acquired through harmony and balance with our natural environment" (Cardinal 1977: 123). In another passage Cardinal writes: "Knowledge for Indian culture is union with all being" (Cardinal 1977: 123). A Indian understanding of reality does not necessarily oppose all form of technological "advancement." Rather, the purpose of the critique of Indian philosophy is to provide constraint and reevaluation of the narrative of instrumental rationality.

Cardinal's philosophy of architecture sees the architecture of our age as demonstrating the principles of instrumental rationality (it is an objectification of mind, to use Dilthey's term):

Our urban centres are physical manifestations of how we think; compartmentalized cubes separating us, dividing us, marching in rows of vertically containerized cubes. These containers are drab, lifeless pitiful substitutes for the fathomless stimuli of the earth and universe (Cardinal 1977: 125).

Like feminists such as Bordo, Cardinal sees the alienating, intellectualized effect of scientific rationality:

The result is compartmentalized minds that forces our natural faculties, our feelings, organs, senses into limiting cubes which are mere containers on an assembly line labelled for roles in the pyramid (Cardinal 1977: 125).

Cardinal is categorically against the mechanistic philosophy of the Enlightenment. In "The Human Organism and the Mechanical Grid," Cardinal contrasts the more holistic philosophy of Indians with the more mechanistic philosophy of the Enlightenment. Environmental degradation can be understood as a product of instrumental rationality. The mechanical grid is similar to Descartes' geometrical system. The manner in which we comport to technology is an aesthetic expression. Our aesthetic expressions can be seen as asking great questions about the age in which we live. The effects of technology, such as clear-cutting, can be seen as reflections of the *Zeitgeist* which demonstrates a totalization of consciousness (Adorno and

Horkenheimer's term).

Cardinal refers to his building as being part of the "organism" of the surrounding environment: "The growth pattern of a community should be influenced by the natural terrain, trees, foliage, water and the right of each member of the community to share in the natural beauty of a place" (Cardinal 1977: 34). If the earth could be seen in a similar way, that is as an animate entity, we then, perhaps, would have a different attitude towards it. Melnyk writes: "In the culture of the native people ... the land stops being a thing, an object, a product of man the way it is in our culture" (Melnyk 1977: 11). Like Heidegger, Cardinal's Indian philosophy sees a totality and holism in reality: "The Indian sense of the land is not only dynamic; it is also a vision of oneness and totality" (Melnyk 1977: 12). Cardinal writes: "Our basic philosophy emphasizes the oneness of all living beings. Our reverence for life causes us to be deeply concerned about life and our lifegivers. Their destruction means the physical and spiritual destruction of ourselves" (Cardinal 1977: 44).

The twentieth century has witnessed the rapid urbanization of populations throughout the world. Indian philosophy must, undoubtedly, endeavour to make itself relevant to people living in urban as well as in rural areas. It must be acknowledged that people who live in cities, and who wish, in good will, to engage in a hermeneutical conversation with Indian philosophy, are perhaps somewhat limited in their options to practice the philosophy. There are few open spaces in the urban landscape. Despite this, one could engage with Indian philosophy through actions such as: 1) recycling, 2) supporting environmental causes, and 3) coming to terms, in their own way, with the fragmentation of understanding which permeates modernity. In turn, one could use the conceptual schemes of Indian philosophy to reconstruct their own world view.

Cardinal, like Heidegger, laments the fragmentation of our understanding of reality

(Being): "The oneness of Indian culture finds its symbolic expression in the circle, the native people's ultimate metaphor for totality" (Melnik 1977: 12). The symbol of the circle is also found in Heidegger's ontology of the difference between Being and being. The symbol of the circle is also suggested in my notion of conceptual hole (there is always a difference between narrative and reality). Because of the finitude of our understanding and experience, we always move transcend it. The process is not a linear one, but would be better characterized as a circular process (namely the dialectical pull between different narratives and the relationship between these narratives and reality itself). Ultimately, if we see a revised version of Rawls' original position as a useful heuristic device, then we also use the symbol of the circle to denote the hermeneutical conversation that people would have in the original position.

Cardinal writes in the introduction to his book, *Of the Spirit*, that there does not have to be an essential difference between the interpretative frameworks of instrumental rationality and that of Indian philosophy:

I am convinced that the Indian sense of reality does not have to be in conflict with that of the dominant society. An inward look would reveal to us that we all, as members of the human family, aspire to the same values (Cardinal 1977: 8)

Cardinal asserts the notion of commensurability between different interpretative horizons.

As suggested above, Cardinal's philosophy of architecture and his ontology bear remarkable comparison to Heidegger's philosophy of Being, in particular, his philosophy as found in "Building Dwelling Thinking" (Heidegger 1977d). Unlike the instrumental mode of rationality which stresses domination, Cardinal stresses attunement: "On the plains, the rivers, trees, hills, valleys and varied terrain are beauty. To land developers and the urban developers they are wasted real estate" (Cardinal 1977: 31-32). He stresses that the present architectural orientation to the "grid" alienates: "As time passes the whole organism increases in size and the grid-like pattern of arteries becomes more and more inefficient" (Cardinal

1977: 32). Once again, Cardinal understands the city in metaphorical terms, viewing it as a physical embodiment.

Cardinal writes of what Indian philosophy has to offer the world:

... we still feel the oneness of all living beings, the oneness of all life. We have a tremendous amount of knowledge to offer our people and our future generations. We have a tremendous amount of knowledge to offer mankind. We must teach the industrial societies the meaning of life (Cardinal 1977: 46).

Cardinal writes: "When aboriginal peoples can come to understand technological society as the thing it is, they can make a great contribution to mankind" (Cardinal 1977: 102).

Annie L. Booth and Harvey M. Jacobs in their thoughtful article "Ties That Bind: Native American Beliefs as a Foundation for Environmental Consciousness," write: "In particular, ecofeminism equates the suppression and domination of nature with the domination of women, and for similar reasons. Each was, and is, perceived as dangerous and in need of control" (Booth and Jacobs 1990: 29). While Booth and Jacobs make many insightful points, they tend to romanticize Indian philosophy, and in the process create a rather simplistic and narrow conception of it. Cardinal rightly points out the manner in which the Indian has been characterized. There are also dialectical tensions in the dominant narrative of Indian people. I have already alluded to them in chapter two. In Cree culture, women have been seen as Other and have been degraded. The ideological subordination of women in the Cree life-world is inconsistent with the claim of the Indian narrative of holism. This is an example where the aboriginal narrative can be enriched by the European narrative of liberalism.

Indian people must also be critically aware of the manner in which they have adopted tenets of instrumental rationality. They need to point out the contradictions in our own thinking (between the theory and practice of Indian philosophy). An example of this is the Meadow Lake Tribal Council's decision to store uranium waste. Another conflict is the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians's tacit endorsement of uranium mining. Indians have produced a

theory/ practice difference within their own life-world which creates hierarchies within a society. Habermas writes:

... the danger of an exclusively technical civilization, which is devoid of the interconnection between theory and practice, can be clearly grasped; it is threatened by the splitting of its consciousness, and by the splitting of human beings into two classes- the social engineers and the inmates of closed institutions (Habermas 1973: 282).

This has occurred in the cases of Indians of both genders and also in the case of women.

The resolution of the paradox of Enlightenment ultimately will help voices which have been marginalized to have a stronger voice.

Habermas speaks of a dualism between "the natural and cultural sciences" (Habermas 1988: 1) which demonstrates the paradox of Enlightenment. Habermas stresses the limitations of hermeneutics and argues for a "tempering of its claims" (Habermas 1988: 59). He continues: "No choice between competing interpretations can be achieved through *Verstehen* itself" (Habermas 1988: 59). Habermas wants to break out of the hermeneutical circle by appealing to the normativity of science.

In the first chapter, I mentioned that I was inspired to create my dialectic of Enlightenment in a general manner by the work of Horkenheimer and Adorno. Habermas discusses their book *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. "On their analysis, it is no longer possible to place hope in the liberating force of enlightenment" (Habermas 1987: 106). Like Heidegger, they tend to stress the dark side of the Enlightenment (which in this chapter I have mentioned as being instrumental rationality- but this is only one pole of the dialectic of Enlightenment). The project of Horkenheimer and Adorno undermined the objective pretensions of the natural sciences. I think that Horkenheimer and Adorno are right to delimit and attack the objective and normative claims of Enlightenment. Habermas characterizes what they were trying to deconstruct: "... it lays claim to it only in the form of a purposive-rational mastery of nature and instinct- precisely as instrumental reason" (Habermas 1987: 111).

While there is much constructive discussion to be generated by Adorno and Horkheimer's critical analysis of modernity, lived experience must be justified as well as constrained. Science constrains narratives in the same manner that universal reason does. While Habermas does belong to the hermeneutical camp, he also diverges significantly from the hermeneutical methodology of, for example, Gadamer. However, Habermas does not view science merely as a societal construction. Usually, *Verstehen* is strictly limited to intersubjective understanding. Undoubtedly, this is partly caused by the fact that hermeneutics is in many ways a neo-Kantian movement. Habermas writes that meaning is not private but rather has "intersubjective validity" (Habermas 1982: 155). In another passage, Habermas attacks the intersubjective limitations of reason: "The historian will not be able to limit himself in his explanations to a logic of action that incorporates the hermeneutic understanding of meaning, for the historic context is not exhausted by the mutual intentions of human beings" (Habermas 1988: 35). In other words, narratives are constrained by external circumstances.

Habermas writes: "In this ahistorical civilization, the nomological sciences, the methodology of which excludes a connection to history, take over the 'direction of action and knowledge' " (Habermas 1988: 19). In the section on Rawls, I analyzed the manner in which Rawls uses notions of objectivity. The Rawlsian conception of the self is excessively thin. There is no sense of embodiment nor thickness. We need history to have this. Habermas cites H. Schlesky to round out this point:

Modern society obeys the laws of the reconstruction of the world through natural and social sciences that have become technologies. The stability and autonomy of modern industrial and scientific civilization remove the effective possibility of a personality guided by ideas, as they remove the necessity to understand political and social activity in historical terms (Schlesky 1963: 280. cf. Habermas 1988: 19).

In Descartes especially, but also in other Enlightenment thinkers, there was a stress on

autonomy and freedom. This freedom was premised on the desire to smash history and the existing narrative (part of the dialect of Enlightenment). The above quotation from Schlesky reflects the ahistorical pretensions of science.

Habermas wants to acknowledge the importance that history has for narrative construction, thereby undermining the objective pretensions of the natural sciences:

... social action exists only with reference to the system of traditional cultural patterns in which the self-understanding of social groups is articulated. The methodology of the sciences of action cannot avoid the problem of understanding the meaning of hermeneutically appropriating cultural tradition (Habermas 1988: 56).

At some level, Habermas might be seen as espousing a closure of interpretative horizons. He might also be viewed as advocating social determinism (i.e. that we have socially prescribed roles for us) like Sandel, Taylor and MacIntyre- a sort of determinism. Rather, Habermas, like Kymlicka, understands social narratives merely as the context in which decisions occur. The self is understood to be embedded within interpretative matrices.

At this point, I want to outline Habermas' attack on positivism. He attacks the extreme positivism which I have outlined earlier. Habermas notes that the ahistorical pretensions of scientific rationality can be used to justify the status quo: "Given such a scientifically legitimated suppression of history, the objective illusion may arise that with the help of the nomological sciences life-praxis can be relegated exclusively to the functional sphere of instrumental action" (Habermas 1988: 19). Instrumental action is somewhat similar to instrumental rationality. Habermas calls the objective pretensions of the natural sciences an "appearance" (Habermas 1988: 20) which "conceals the complex of interests that unreflectively determines the direction of technological progress" (Habermas 1988: 20).

Habermas' task of attempting to bridge the gap between the poles of Enlightenment is related closely to the central task of this thesis. We all are certainly members of interpretative communities. Habermas writes:

The specific characteristic of this linguistically structured community is that *individuated persons communicate in it*. On the foundations of intersubjectivity they accord in something general in such a way that they identify with one another and reciprocally know as well as acknowledge one another as homogeneous subjects. At the same time, however, in communication individuals can keep a distance from one another and assert against each other the inalienable identity of their egos (Habermas 1981: 157)

Habermas speaks of the relationship between the self and the community. This compares favourably to my notion of liberalism, as it also does to Kymlicka's distinct but related version.

The brand of hermeneutics that I have been asserting is essential in bridging the poles of Enlightenment. It mediates between the two poles, reminding us that participants on both sides of the Enlightenment dialectic are embedded within frameworks and have preunderstandings:

Hermeneutic knowledge is always mediated through this preunderstanding, which is derived from the interpreter's initial situation. The world of traditional meaning discloses itself to the interpreter only to the extent that his own world becomes clarified at the same time. The subject of understanding establishes communication between both worlds. He comprehends the substantive content of *applying* tradition to himself and his situation (Habermas 1981: 310).

Habermas' discursive ethics provide a foundation for a thick theory of liberalism. Unlike Rawls' and Kant's ethical philosophy, people come to the table full of interpretative content. The possibility of a communicative discursive ethic enables different people and groups of people to arrive at mutual understandings and to come together to form a metanarrative. The conversation has content because embodied and lived experience is acknowledged. Where I differ from communitarians, is that I hold that lived and embodied experience can be transcended. Habermas writes:

However, only in an emancipated society, whose members' autonomy and responsibility had been realized, would communication have developed into the non-authoritarian and universally practiced dialogue from which both our model of reciprocally constituted ego identity and our idea of true consensus are always implicitly desired (Habermas 1981: 314).

This is Habermas' attempt at resolving the paradox of Enlightenment. At the same time, he quite clearly advocates an open-ended conception of rationality.

The impending environmental crisis forces the issue of instrumental rationality. While the advent of technology and science have undoubtedly improved the lives of humans in many ways, we are also approaching the limits of progress. The environmental crisis puts objective constraints on narrative construction. It challenges the traditional human focused limitations of liberalism by urging humankind to factor the "interests" of the earth into political decisions. Unlike the traditional liberal conception of neutrality about the Good, the fact is that we cannot be neutral. We have to become involved and see the earth as a limiting force on our mode of understanding reality. We have to think of new ways and of new concerns in the original position. Rawls himself saw the original position as being capable of changing through time. And in this way, to some extent Rawls has an open-ended conception of rationality: "But this equilibrium is not necessarily stable. It is liable to be upset by further examination of the conditions which should be imposed on the contractual situation and by particular cases which may lead us to revise our judgments" (Rawls 1971: 21).

Our moral vocabularies are constantly shifting and changing. Habermas encourages a fluid notion of ethics. Habermas holds that it is only through "*communicative ethics*" that we can evaluate the validity and claims of moral narratives. (Habermas 1975: 89). Instead of being fixed, communicative ethics should be an ongoing, hermeneutical conversation.

Habermas continues on this line:

That is, generality is guaranteed in that the only norms that may claim generality are those on which everyone affected agrees (or would agree) without constraint if they enter into (or were to enter into) a process of discursive will formation (Habermas 1975: 89).

An attempt to resolve the crisis of legitimacy was mentioned in chapter two. There is, however, a fundamental difference between Rawls and Habermas as they advocate different forms of Kantian universalism. Rawls does this by arguing for a thin notion of experience, while Habermas opts for a thicker notion of experience.

Different cultures and groups contain a wide variety of views and elements. It is highly simplistic to assume that societal narratives exist as monolithic "conceptual frameworks" which cannot be amended or supplemented. A more hermeneutical understanding of societal narratives replaces the pejorative "relativism" term with the more positive term of "pluralism." Different narratives can fuse into one another and exchange elements of contents.

Every horizon, in itself, is both finite in scope and is limited. The field of objects is not captured only from one perspective. Gadamer writes: "Every finite present has its limitations. We define the concept of 'situation' by saying that it represents a standpoint that has possibility of a situation" (Gadamer 1975: 269). This is the limitation of any interpretative horizon. Other horizons can reorientate the conceptual holes generated by any given horizon. In this way, a more holistic interpretation can be reached. The holes can, as it were, be filled.

Warnke described this idea from a Gadamerian perspective:

Our initial expectations and assumptions are changed by the encounter with other perspectives even if we have finally to reject them for ourselves. In rejecting them, we affirm our own perspective in a new way, a way more differentiated and aware of its own partiality and potential deficiencies (Warnke 1990: 154).

By drawing upon different interpretative frameworks, conceptual holes "can be filled." There is a constant dialectic for truth between different interpretative frameworks. Warnke adds:

"Traditions of interpretation remain vital because they are continually developed, affirmed, and reworked in line with the insights achieved in interpretative encounters with alien traditions and, indeed, with different aspects of themselves" (Warnke 1990: 155). In this way, Indian philosophy can be incorporated into the "communicative discourse" (Habermas' term) of modernity.

Using Indian philosophy, we can rethink the Rawlsian original position. Instead of considering of ourselves as excessively thin, our notions of self are thick which will allow us to

construct a very different model of the original position. Warnke adds: "The idea here is not to pick between interpretations of our political traditions, but rather to achieve a differentiated synthesis in which the merits and differences of alternative interpretations can be recognized and preserved" (Warnke 1990: 156). Warnke adds: "Hence an essential part of the concept of the situation is the concept of 'horizon.' The horizon is the range of the vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point" (Warnke 1990: 156). Every vantage point has its advantages and disadvantages. For example, instrumental rationality has allowed us to manipulate the material world in such a way that our lives have been improved. Many people today do not live in the miserable conditions in which their ancestors did. But the horizon of instrumental rationality has also limited us and threatened the very survival of our planet.

Habermas writes of Gadamer's use of the image of horizon:

Gadamer uses the image of the horizon to capture the fundamental hermeneutical character of every concrete language: it is so far from having a closed boundary that it can in principle incorporate everything that is linguistically foreign and at first unintelligible. Each of the partners between whom communication must be established, however, lives with a horizon. Thus Gadamer represents the hermeneutic process of coming to an understanding with the image of a fusion of horizons. This is true both for the vertical plane, on which we overcome a historical distance through understanding on a horizontal plane, which mediates a linguistic distance that is geographical or cultural. The appropriation of tradition through understanding follows the model of translation: the horizon of the present is not extinguished but rather fused with the horizon from which the tradition stems... (Habermas 1988: 151).

All understanding for Gadamer occurs in a historical context. Gadamer writes: "The historical movement of human life consists in the fact that it is never utterly bound to any one standpoint, and hence can never have a truly closed horizon" (Gadamer 1975: 271). Warnke writes: "We are, in Gadamer's view, thoroughly historical and this means that our history penetrates even those critical designs or procedures through which we try to provide for a critical distance from our own beliefs and political traditions" (Warnke 1990: 137). The communicative discourse is thus ongoing.

I do, however, have a quarrel with Gadamer's overly thick conception of experience:

... he wants also to situate our expectations in history: they are *not* ours alone but those of the culture and tradition to which we belong. Central here is Gadamer's notion of effective-history: the idea that who we are and what we think is the product not of self-determination and reason, as the Enlightenment might have us think, but rather of our past (Warnke 1990: 152).

By this model we seem to be restrictively bound to our traditions; as such the possibility of a Habermasian communicative discourse seems to be exceedingly difficult. Gadamer does, however, see horizons gradually changing over time:

The horizon is, rather, something into which we move and that moves with us. Horizons change for a person who is moving. Thus the horizon of the past, out of which all humans live and which exists in the form of tradition, is always in motion (Gadamer 1975: 271).

The tradition of the Enlightenment has changed throughout its history. And, as such, there is the possibility that through positive changes, the horizon will continue to shift in new directions. Throughout the course of this thesis, I have tried to sketch out the ramifications of what this could mean.

I hold a position similar to Habermas:

Gadamer's prejudice in favour of the legitimacy of prejudices (or prejudgments) validated by tradition is in conflict with the power of reflection, which proves itself in its ability to reject the claim of traditions ... Certainly, knowledge is rooted in actual tradition; it remains bound to contingent conditions (Habermas 1988: 170).

The limits of reason can be expanded through a fusion of horizons, to use Gadamer's term. Contra Winch, this requires a strong notion of commensurability. The different narratives can fuse into each other, offering each other new possibilities, and in turn, offering the metanarrative of Reason new possibilities. By rethinking the limits of rationality, as found in both liberalism and instrumental rationality, we can also move towards a new environmental ethic. The earth can be seen as an end and not merely as a means. By understanding the earth as an end in itself, we can move towards a new Enlightenment. We can, thus, move beyond the present limits of reason which stress primarily intersubjective interests.

Liberalism can be expanded to include a concern for the world and a notion of

environmental protection. But, this notion must also be applied to liberalism itself in a reflective manner: liberalism advocates that traditional narratives be open to change, and in the same manner liberalism itself must be open to change. Liberalism must accomplish this through history, and new historical experiences, including the environmental crisis, will constantly shift it. This is what I mean by an open-ended conception of rationality.

I would like to end the chapter with the following quotation: "We struggle against history not by ignoring the limits it imposes on either who we are or the political positions we can take; we struggle against history rather by acknowledging the multiple meanings it can have for us and learning from their confrontation with one another" (Wamke 1990: 157). By engaging in a meaningful hermeneutical conversation, different citizens of a modern liberal state can see the possibilities that they have to offer one another in a peaceful and constructive manner.

Conclusion:

Throughout this thesis, I have used hermeneutics to construct a foundation for liberalism. I wish to be careful in my clarification of the manner in which I define "foundations." In a certain sense, the term "foundations" if applied to hermeneutics, would be misleading. Foundationalism implies that there is an Archimedean point to reasoning which avoids an infinite regression. From a foundation, one can ground knowledge claims on a solid base. With foundationalism, there is, however, a closure of interpretative horizon. Dilthey equated such a closure of interpretative horizons with metaphysics.

The search for foundations involves the rethinking of existing discourse. I think immediately of Descartes' search for true methods and the complete rethinking of medieval Christianity (the older narrative). He used architectural metaphors to illustrate the manner in which the former narrative had to be rebuilt. Instead of the narratives providing elements for every narrative to draw upon, one narrative is given precedence over other narratives. Richard Rorty, a prominent antifoundationalistic thinker, takes an extreme position on this matter. In his position, narratives radically displace each other.

Foundationalism entails a conceptual stasis. Heidegger attacked the notion of thinking of the totality of reality as a "whatness" (quiditas), and instead, preferred to think of the totality of reality (Being) as a process. Dilthey, like Heidegger, challenged the dogmatic stasis of interpretative discourse. While he attacked the idea of dogmas and fixed interpretative horizons, he still had a measure of constancy throughout his notion of *Verstehen* (Understanding). With Dilthey's hermeneutical model, our understanding of reality becomes a historical process, and subsequently we begin to understand historical, phenomenological objects through time. *Verstehen* is a universal phenomenon and allows commensurability

between different interpretative horizons. The process of universal conversation, namely hermeneutics, provides a foundation for liberalism.

I have used a hermeneutical perspective to substantiate the need for a rethinking of liberalism. A hermeneutical perspective attempts to see our understanding of reality as always shifting and always changing. The key notion of commensurability, furthermore, allows different narratives to be grafted on to each other. Elements can be exchanged from one narrative to another. On the same note, by using a hermeneutical model, we can think of the liberal project in terms of a hermeneutical conversation. Individuals from different interpretative horizons would share with one another, including their conceptions of the Good.

There is an important difference between my project and that of Rawls' work. The Rawls of 1971 had a strong foundationalistic position. Rawls envisioned a conversation between different individuals which would determine the principles of justice through a process of reflective equilibrium. Once this process has occurred it is, however, not open to further amendments. In this way, we can speak of it as being a model of closed rationality. One of the problems with Rawls' view is that in it the self is excessively thin. Employing my hermeneutical understanding of liberalism, it becomes obvious how difficult it is to determine how one can have a discussion of the principles of justice without having anything to talk about. The Rawlsian self arrives at the hermeneutical conversation, thus, empty, and is supposed to leave with a full conception of justice.

In chapter two, I stress the importance of acknowledging the thickness of our experience. I hold that in order to have a meaningful conversation about political principles, we have to present ourselves with experience and a certain vantage point. It is only through an ongoing liberal conversation with others that we can amend our viewpoints of the world. Modern communitarians stress lived or thick experience and often cite Aristotle as a sort of

authority figure to help justify their positions. In the first chapter, I attempted to place Aristotle in a historical context by emphasizing his place in the dialectic of Enlightenment. By doing so, I have showed some of the limitations of the Aristotelian position. Since communitarian views substantially on Aristotle, this process does something to resurrect the liberal project of the Greek sophists. While attempting to acknowledge the importance of the thickness or starting point of our experience, I hold that ultimately we can also move beyond it. One of the ways in which we can do this is through conversation with others.

The thickness of any interpretative horizon does not remain constant. We can always transcend the interpretative horizon we find ourselves in. What remains common is not a dogma nor the contents of a particular narrative, but rather the process of the hermeneutical conversation between various parties. By transcending the finitude of our existence and experience, we move towards a form of universalism. A universalistic approach provides constraints on local narratives and allows individuals to think outside of interpretative horizons. In chapter two, I argued against Rorty's view that narratives are not constrained. I argue in this thesis, in fact, that there are two ways in which narratives are constrained: 1) through the process of a universal hermeneutical conversation, and 2) through the limits of material reality imposed by science and also by the impending environmental crisis.

The process of universal hermeneutical conversation constrains narratives. Conceptual holes emerge within existing narratives when they are compared to other narratives (e.g. the status of Cree women within their own communities when confronted with more gender egalitarian narratives). The older narrative can be rearranged by using newer elements from other narratives. All narratives form a "common pool" (or *objective mind*) which creates a theoretical pool of possibilities for various narratives to draw upon. The ability to draw upon other narratives affords the possibility of being improved upon and puts constraints upon the

communitarian project. In other words, the thickness of the interpretative horizon we find ourselves in can be "thinned out." Instead of merely appealing to some arcane notion as "this is what we do here," participants of a particular narrative have to justify its existence. Collective rights or recognition of nationhood help in the just alteration of narratives. They protect minorities within nation states from being coerced by the majority culture, while individual rights protect individuals within national minorities.

Universal reason must put constraints on the intersubjective constructions of knowledge. Traditionally, liberalism has seen the construction of concepts of the Good life as primarily an intersubjective phenomenon and for intersubjective interests. Chapter one addressed the direction in which narratives shifted during the Greek Enlightenment. The Greek Enlightenment, however, did not shift the manner in which we could instrumentally manipulate the physical universe. Chapter two dealt with the reality of the existence of many national minorities within a nation state. There was an assertion that it was possible for different nations of people to dwell together peacefully within the borders of one nation state. The granting of minority rights and the recognition of an asymmetrical federalism would put constraints on political hermeneutical conversation. Through the protection afforded by legal rights, members of the minority culture or nation could not be coerced into changing their narratives.

Narratives, I argued in the third chapter, must change in response to the materiality of reality. I also argue that while narratives should not be coerced into changing, the findings and the success of modern science have forced older narratives to reassess their traditional beliefs systems. In the context of modern Europe, the traditional belief structure was orthodox Christianity. In chapter two, I argued that Indian nations have to be able to determine their political and cultural destinies. Nonetheless, at the same time, the narratives of Indian nations

have to be constrained externally by other narratives and by transhistorical standards. Indian narratives must take into account the successes of modern science. While some aspects of Indian metaphysics may be ultimately undermined by the narrative of modern science, there is merit in Indian philosophy which can be added to the metanarrative of human beings. Indian philosophy, in a manner similar to feminism, challenges the extreme elements of instrumental rationality.

Throughout this thesis, I have stressed the relationship between theory and practice. I have argued that thick experience must be considered if a theory is to adequately deal with phenomena presented to us. In the second chapter, I argued that John Rawls' original position fails to take into account the lived and thick experience of individuals. While being generally sympathetic to Rawls' liberal project, I also think that the lived experience of Indian people in Canada challenges central liberal assumptions of universal citizenship. (Feminist scholarship also demonstrates the paradoxes within narratives by, for example, showing the difference between theory and practice). In this thesis, I have tried not only to rethink hermeneutics but also liberalism: 1) with hermeneutics I have placed emphasis on the need for external justification of narratives and 2) for liberalism I have tried to import the notion of lived experience into liberal discussions. In the end, I have ultimately argued for an open-ended conception of rationality. It is not the contents of our conversations that necessarily remain constant, but rather the process of conversation itself. Our age, especially given the environmental crisis and tension between different ethnic groups within nation states, needs a constructive universal dialogue.

The modern Enlightenment brought about a radical change in modes of production: both ideological and material. Throughout history, groups of human beings have struggled with one another for power. Modern science has afforded human beings more possibility to

dominate each other, but also to dominate the earth. It would be a mistake, and perhaps an oversimplification of history, to view science itself as the problem. Heidegger and Bordo claim that science has destroyed positive qualities of human nature and reshaped it into something radically new. By attacking the objective pretensions of science, important limitations of science are demarcated. Instrumental rationality, *one way of interpreting the reality of science*, has often led to the creation of hierarchies.

Mass societies make the possibility of conversation difficult because of the sheer number of participants which would be involved in the conversation. "Totalized consciousness" (Horkenheimer and Adorno's term) arises, and finds expression in totalized regimes. During the first half of the twentieth century, totalitarian regimes attempted to deal with the problem of communication between participants. The solution was to limit and end an open-ended discussion. The conversation was extremely limited because of the propaganda of the state.

Douglas Cardinal confronts modernity with a hermeneutics of suspicion, but at the same time derives elements from it to formulate a revamped Indian philosophy. Earlier in their history, Cree people would sit around in circles to discuss political and other issues. The "circle" can be thought of as a heuristic device wherein we can all come to understand the notion of hermeneutical conversation. Technology led to the concentration of political power in nation states which also led to the formation of totalitarian states. While the dark possibilities of Enlightenment have manifested themselves in this century, there are also great possibilities in the traditional Enlightenment ideals. It is currently fashionable in universities to talk about deconstructing Enlightenment ideals including pretensions of objectivity. The theoretical foundation for these critiques is rooted in the Diltheyean stress on lived and embodied experience. Modernity, however, affords us possibilities of opening up a

multilayered and rich conversation of human beings through such technological advances as the internet. The paradigm of conversation of Indian people, the "talking circle," can be similarly revamped through the utilization of modern technologies. While it is important to engage in a hermeneutics of suspicion, we must also not be paralyzed by fear. We must, after noting and coming to terms with the dark side of Enlightenment, seek to benefit from its great possibilities.

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